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Arab-Israeli Talks

'Arafat Agrees Not To Arrive in Territories 6 Jun

TA1905194194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said that in his meeting with Yasir 'Arafat it was agreed that the PLO chairman would not arrive in the territories on 6 June, which is an emotionally charged date in the historic sense. Peres expressed disappointment with Jordan's hesitation and said that the regional economic conference slated to take place there had been moved to Morocco.

Our correspondent Gid'on Kouts reports that Foreign Minister Peres met with French President Francois Mitterrand this evening. In their meeting, Mitterrand presented France's position that there is no necessary link between the Syrian-Israeli negotiations and the Lebanese track. Peres replied that Lebanon's positions were too tightly linked to Syria's. President Mitterrand promised to help Israel gain full membership in the European Community in all matters related to science and research. This has met with the objections of several countries, including the United Kingdom.

Our correspondent adds that Foreign Minister Peres participated in a festive ceremony in memory of singer Yves Montand. The proceeds of the event will go to a cancer research laboratory named after the singer at the Weizman Institute.

Tunisian Minister Accepts Invitation To Visit Israel

TA1905125994 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 19 May 94 p 2

[Report by Doron Sharm]

[Excerpts] Yisra'el Peleg, the director general of the Environment Ministry, met in Tunis with Tunisian Environment Minister Mohamed Mehdi Mlika who promised to visit Israel in the near future.

Peleg, who heads the Israeli delegation to the conference of Mediterranean countries in Tunis, handed the Tunisian minister an invitation to visit Israel from Environment Minister Yosi Sarid. Minister Mlika hoped that his visit to Israel would be possible as soon as Israel wrapped up the last details with the Palestinians. "God willing, I will come to visit," Mlika said, sending personal regards to Yosi Sarid. [passage omitted]

At the end of the second day of discussions, there was disagreement between the Tunisians and the other delegations on the establishment of a special committee that would promote development projects independently of the Barcelona Treaty for Environmental Protection. A proposal initiated by the the Israeli delegation facilitated a compromise according to which Tunis' recommendation to establish a Mediterranean committee for sustainable development was accepted. The date for a discussion of the proposal's details, however, will be scheduled at the next conference in 1995.

At the end of the session, the Tunisian representative said he appreciated Israel's contribution in breaking the impasse.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Yemen Names New Arab League Delegate

NC1905124294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1145 GMT 19 May 94

[Excerpt] Cairo, 19 May (MENA)—The Arab League General Secretariat has received a message from Yemeni Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwah appointing Ambassador Muhammad Ahmad Luqman as Yemen's new delegate to the League, replacing Ambassador Ahmad al-Shajani, who died and was buried in Cairo a few days ago. [passage omitted]

Arab Countries' Military Spending Analyzed

NC2005033194 Paris AFP in English 1904 GMT 19 May 94

[By Nadim Kawash]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, May 19 (AFP)—Arab budgets, already hit by low oil prices, are reeling under heavy defence spending at the expense of development allocations, an official Arab report said on Thursday [19 May].

In countries such as Syria and Yemen, defence and security expenditure consumed nearly half the total government spending while in the oil-rich Gulf states it far exceeded allocations for public and social services, said the report by the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Monetary Fund (AMF).

The report gave no new figures for Saudi Arabia, which has sharply boosted defence spending since the Gulf war.

It also did not cover Iraq, believed to be the region's biggest spender on defence as it had the strongest army in the Arab world before being crushed by a U.S.-led coalition in the Gulf war in early 1991 after it invaded Kuwait.

Most Arab states do not divulge figures on defence spending but Gulf nations have made no secret of their intentions to bolster their armies.

Military experts believe Saudi Arabia and its five partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) may spend more than 50 billion dollars on arms by 2000.

"High defence spending is one of the reasons for the economic problems in the Arab world and persistent budget deficits in wealthy Gulf states," said a Western diplomat in the region.

"Imagine what could have happened if half of the defence allocations had been channeled into development."

The AMF said defence expenditure in the 22-member Arab League accounted for 28.07 percent of the total 1992 spending of 172 billion dollars. This compared with 34.78 percent of the 1991 spending of 180.16 billion dollars.

Syria, which is still technically at war with neighbouring Israel, emerged as the top spender on defence and security in the region, with allocations of 54.5 percent of the 1992 budget of 3.12 billion dollars.

Yemen, now torn by civil strife, came second, with allocations of 44.55 percent of the total 1992 spending of 4.83 billion dollars.

Defence spending stood at 43.75 percent in Oman, at 39 percent in Kuwait, 36 percent in Qatar, 35.89 percent in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), 34.54 percent in Bahrain, 32.23 percent in Jordan and 27.8 percent in Libya.

In Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia and Mauritania, it ranged between 14 and 26 percent while there were no figures for Lebanon, Djibouti and Somalia. Defence spending in Algeria was the lowest, standing at 8.23 percent.

The report gave figures for Saudi Arabia in 1989, when the defence budget accounted for 25 percent of the total expenditure of 40 billion dollars. But experts believe the level could have risen as the world's top oil producer and exporter has pressed ahead with massive armament plans.

Except for Jordan, Arab states suffered from budget deficits in 1992 while foreign debt, excluding that owed by Iraq, Libya and GCC nations, exceeded 150 billion dollars.

A trade and balance of payments deficit also persisted in Arab states, except in major oil producers.

In Kuwait, the budget deficit soared as high as 84 percent of the Gross Domestic Product while it reached 10.3 percent in Sudan, 10 percent in Yemen, 8.71 percent in Saudi Arabia and 7.28 percent in Jordan.

The AMF report showed Arab spending on public services accounted for 18.67 percent in 1992 while allocations for social services stood at 26.43 percent and for economic development at 12.78 percent.

"High defence allocations underscore the importance of peace in the Middle East," a Gulf-based diplomat said. "It will pay off not only in political and military terms, but in economic terms.

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 10 May

NC1905135794

[Editorial report] The following review of the 10 May issue of Cairo AL-SHA'B summarizes articles that are Islamic in nature.

CONTENTS:

1. Lawyer Tortured to Death
2. Islamists Win Lawyers Election.
3. Anti-Islamic Quarters Behind Yemen's War
4. 4 May Day of Mourning for Palestine
5. Ban on Islamic Writer Blamed on President
6. Roots of Violence in Dayrut Analyzed
7. Mufti's Fatwa on Child Care Criticized
8. Security Men Kill Student in Asyut

LAWYER TORTURED TO DEATH

An approximately 1,500-word report by Khalid Yunus on pages 1 and 7 describes the "state of anger and furor" that gripped lawyers following the death of lawyer 'Abd-al-Harith Madani during "torture" at a State Security Intelligence office following his arrest on 26 April. An emergency meeting of the Lawyers Association Council on 7 May decided to report the incident to the public attorney to order an autopsy on Madani's body to determine the cause of death. In addition, the council decided to "stage a sit-in at the association's headquarters until an inquiry is opened and the names of the culprits announced, to hold a funeral march for the martyr from the association's building, to declare a one-day public strike at every state court, and to pay a sum to the martyr's family in compensation." A statement by the council warned that the crime will not go unpunished. The Egyptian Human Rights Organization has issued a statement expressing concern and regret at the circumstances surrounding the death of its member, Madani. The statement feared that the death could have been the result of "torture" following his arrest. The organization gave its account of how Madani was arrested at his office and of the "illegal and repressive measures" used during the arrest. The deceased, the statement noted, was blindfolded by security men and taken to an unknown destination. After noting that his colleagues confirmed that Madani had been in "good health," the statement referred to its request to the public attorney on 7 May to set up an independent medical team to conduct an autopsy on Madani's body.

ISLAMISTS WIN LAWYERS ELECTION

An approximately 100-word unattributed report on page one reports the victory of named Islamic candidates in

elections to fill half the seats of the Lawyers Association Council in al-Jizah on 8 May. The turnout is said to have been over 75 percent.

ANTI-ISLAMIC QUARTERS BEHIND YEMEN'S WAR

Chief Editor Majdi Ahmad Husayn, in a 2,500-word article on page 3 entitled "The Desert Storm Reaches Yemen," views the war in Yemen. Noting that the Gulf war was a "link in a chain to rechart the map of the Arab region to confront the Islamic tide, Husayn adds that the "Western camp and its advocates in the region continue to reshape the region and finish off the Arab-Islamic front that has rejected the foreign military presence." After reviewing aspects of what is seen as a Western onslaught on Islamic movements in Tunis, Algeria, Lebanon, and Sudan, Husayn says: "Yemen is now paying the price of its independence," because, the writer adds, it seems that the United States "accepts nothing short of obedience, blind obedience." After tracing the course of Yemen's unity and the Islamists' participation in power through the alliance between the General People's Congress and the Reform Party, Husayn claims that as a result, Yemen became an "aberration" of the U.S. order imposed on the region, in view of Yemen's independence and the Islamists' participation in power, which could lead them to win by a majority in any election and thus rule the country singlehanded. As a result, he adds, the Marxists of the south were encouraged by some Gulf quarters and the United States to stiffen their position, even if it led to a separation from the north. He adds: Dividing Yemen into two states is the West's "ultimate goal."

Muslim Brotherhood Deputy Guide Mustafa Mashhur echoes the same theme in part of his approximately 2,000-word article on page 5. He asks: "What promoted south Yemen to conclude unity with north Yemen four years ago? And why is it adopting this stance today, a stance that could bring unity to an end?" He adds: "We know there are quarters that want to fragment the Arab and Islamic world and preclude any unity. These quarters move other hands to stir sedition among the Arab peoples, as was the case in Somalia, where thousands were killed and hundreds of thousands were displaced."

4 MAY DAY OF MOURNING FOR PALESTINE

Writer Muhammad Abu-al-Futuh, in an approximately 1,200-word article on page 4 entitled "A Day of Mourning by Arabism And Islam for Palestine", writes on the self-rule agreement signed between the PLO and Israel in Cairo on 4 May. He notes that the 4 May agreement is not the choice of the Islamic people, who believe that Palestine is Islamic and who have faith that jihad is the way to liberate and restore it. He adds: "We must realize that our enemy knows for certain that the threat to its usurpation of Palestine comes from the pan-Arab current as well as the rising Islamic tide, and that is why it is lying in wait against these two forces."

Muslim Brotherhood Deputy Guide Mustafa Mashhur shares Abu-al-Futuh's views in his article on page 5. He notes that the Gaza-Jericho agreement has been depicted as a "historic victory" for the PLO, whereas in fact it is an utter "disgrace, shame, and humiliation." He points out that the record of the "Zionist enemy" is replete with incidents against peace, so how could there be peace between it and the Palestinian people? He concludes by urging the current Muslim generations not to be duped by the peace "festivals" aimed at giving legitimacy to the "humiliating defeat" in this agreement. Palestine, he adds, will remain alive in the hearts of every Muslim until it is fully liberated and the al-Aqsa Mosque rescued from captivity.

BAN ON ISLAMIC WRITER BLAMED ON PRESIDENT

In an approximately 600-word article on page 12, Muslim Brotherhood member and writer Muhammad 'Abd-al-Quddus notes that Islamic writer Fahmy Huwaydi's weekly articles in AL-AHRAM are still banned. After noting that the ban shames the newspaper itself and discredits the regime's claims that it does not ban any writer or opinion, 'Abd-al-Quddus points out that a review of some of the banned articles he has seen shows that the ban is sheer injustice. One of the articles, he says, speaks about the application of Islamic Shari'ah in Kuwait, in which the writer cautioned against any hasty implementation of Islamic rulings since this could be harmful to Islam. Another banned article, 'Abd-al-Quddus adds, notes the defeat of secularism in Turkey on its home grounds at the hands of the Islamists. Defending Huwaydi, the writer notes that the prominent Islamic writer is accused of being extremist, but his views in defense of the Copts and democracy attest to the contrary. He adds: "I believe that banning his articles is not the responsibility of the chief editor alone, since the owner of the newspaper has greater responsibility—and by the owner I mean the head of state, who owns AL-AHRAM as well as other government papers and who makes appointments there." He notes that it is clear that "the president of the republic does not encourage any talk about the application of shari'ah in our country; in fact, the contrary is definitely true. The prevailing tendency under the current regime is to try to separate religion and the state." In conclusion, the writer gives the following advice to the president: "Beware of those who seek to deify you. They are the ones responsible for 'Abd-al-Nasir and al-Sadat's drift. Remember your first years in power, when you were very sensitive to anything that could tarnish your image among the people, rejected hypocrisy, and viewed your birthday as a personal occasion and not an opportunity to glorify yourself."

Touching on the same topic, writer Midhat Abu-al-Fadl notes in his approximately 1,500-word article on page 8 that there is a "coordinated media campaign seeking to exclude moderate Islamists from public work or to harass them, if possible. This campaign is now focusing on the well-known Islamic writer Fahmi Huwaydi." He notes that the secularists in charge of this campaign use

all means, legitimate and otherwise, to attain their goals, which shows that to the secularists freedom of opinion is nothing but a slogan. He cites as an example an article by writer Dr. 'Abd-al-'Azim Ramadan published in the magazine UKTUBAR on 1 May, in which Ramadan accused Huwaydi of defending terrorism. After refuting Ramadan's claims, Abu-al-Fadl says that Ramadan is inciting the authorities against a man whose only fault is using his right of freedom of speech.

ROOTS OF VIOLENCE IN DAYRUT ANALYZED

An approximately 3,000-word report by Jamal Imbabi on page 6 views the situation in the city of Dayrut, with its violence between security forces and Islamic groups. The writer interviews several officials and citizens, who give opinions of the roots of violence in the city, which is situated 60 km north of Asyut. Former People's Assembly deputy Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahim believes that the ruling National Democratic Party has kept itself busy with partisan affairs and left the way open to the Islamic militants to build clinics, schools, and Koranic recitation centers and to organize religious seminars. In the absence of a state role, these groups helped the poor and assisted students. Thanks to the political vacuum, many accepted their beliefs, 'Abd-al-Rahim adds. Another former People's Assembly member, Husam al-Kilani, attributes the spread of these groups and the rise in violence to unemployment and a deterioration in the standards of living. Teacher Ibrahim Zayid blames the violence on police brutality and mistreatment of people. The writer notes that despite the relative calm in the city of Dayrut, security sources say that 13 senior members of the group are still at large. According to the chief of intelligence in Dayrut, once they are captured, 80 percent of violence in the city will end, since it will be very hard for the group to find similar experienced people.

MUFTI'S FATWA ON CHILD CARE CRITICIZED

A 200-word report by 'Amir 'Abd-al-Mun'im on page 7 criticizes Shaykh Sayyid Tantawi, mufti of the republic, for passing what the writer terms a "strange" fatwa, or religious ruling. The mufti ruled that it is permissible for the state "to enact a law withholding medical care and educational benefits from the family's third child as part of its family planning campaign." According to the mufti, "The officials in charge may restrict what is permissible if the ruler and officials see a need for this after consulting with the experts, so long as the restriction serves the nation's interests."

SECURITY MEN KILL STUDENT IN ASYUT

An unattributed report on page 7 notes that State Security Intelligence men shot Amin Shafiq Hammam, a student in al-Azhar University branch in Asyut, after having kidnapped him from his room in the university dormitory on 25 April. A statement by al-Azhar University students in Asyut notes that Hammam was taken in a car to al-Walidiyah neighborhood, where shots were heard. Next day, the students were surprised to read in the papers that Hammam had been killed in a clash with security forces and that he was found to be in possession of weapons and explosives.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Comments on Self-Rule, Plans, Aid, Talks

NC2005065394 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0510 GMT 20 May 94

[Telephone interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Tunis, by Shihatah Abu-al-Majd in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[Text] [Abu-al-Majd] Dear Arab brothers, peace be upon you. The Arab and Islamic nation is celebrating two happy occasions: The blessed 'Id al-Adha and the return of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian authority to their land. Your Excellency President 'Arafat: Congratulations to the Palestinian people on these two occasions. Perhaps we should start with a word to the struggling Palestinian people and the Arab and Islamic nation.

['Arafat] First, I thank you very much for giving me this good chance to speak through the Voice of the Arabs, the voice of the Arab nation, in these blessed and holy days. Within hours, God willing, Muslims will pray on 'Arafat Mount [in Mecca] and we hope that prayers will soon be held, God willing, in holy Jerusalem, the first of the two qiblahs [direction in which Muslims turn to pray] and the third of the holy shrines, the city to which Prophet Muhammad, may God's peace and prayers be upon him, journeyed, and the cradle of Jesus, peace be upon him.

As we mark this occasion, the Palestinian police force has entered Jericho and Gaza, from which the Israelis fully withdrew hours ago. Gaza and Jericho became the first liberated Palestinian territory over which the Palestinian flag was raised. And it is the first over which Palestinian authority is being exercised since the beginning of this century. This signifies much and indicates many things, not only on the political, national, and pan-Arab levels, but on the level of history and the region as a whole.

I must note the good efforts of my brother President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, who, using everything in his power, helped us to advance this process. The blessed efforts of President Mubarak and my other brothers in Egypt were crowned by the agreement we signed in Cairo under his patronage and supervision.

[Abu-al-Majd] The main question now is: When can the Voice of the Arabs speak with Your Excellency in Jericho, the land of Palestinian authority now, so that we can all rejoice in your return and you can assume your duties among your kin and in your homeland?

['Arafat] Soon, God willing. We hope that in June we will contact you either from Gaza or from Jericho and I will

speak through the Voice of the Arabs, which is dear to me and to all your mujahid Palestinian brothers.

[Abu-al-Majd] Many tasks await you. You must have prepared plans and programs to carry out these tasks in Gaza and Jericho first. Can we hear of these tasks and plans, which are designed for the wellbeing of the Palestinian people?

['Arafat] We have received 38 tasks, that is, the responsibilities in Gaza and Jericho. Now we are assuming between five and seven other responsibilities in the West Bank and, God willing, we will begin talks immediately after 'Id al-Adha on all the arrangements concerning the West Bank. We hope the talks will be held in Cairo. You must be patient with us. I am sure my brothers in Egypt tolerate us. But, after all, this is what you expect from brothers.

[Abu-al-Majd] Naturally we were pleased to see the Palestinian people retrieve their rights in Cairo, Egypt, a country that loves Arabism and the struggle for its nation and bears the burden of its causes. You met Israeli Foreign Minsiter Shim'on Peres in Oslo recently and reports indicate that you agreed to pursue negotiations on implementing Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip, the Jericho area, and later in the West Bank. What are the most important tasks that you are expected to assume in the West Bank and when will the...

['Arafat, interrupting] There are at least five to seven tasks concerning basic fields, such as education, health, tourism, social affairs, work, culture, taxes, and possibly some security issues. Then we must agree with them on redeploying their forces outside cities and populous areas on sites to be agreed upon on 15 July. This is a very important point.

[Abu-al-Majd] When will the Palestinian elections take place within the framework of the National Authority?

['Arafat] Following the Israeli forces' redeployment and withdrawal from residential areas in the West Bank after their complete withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, we are supposed to initiate measures for elections on our Palestinian land, God willing.

[Abu-al-Majd] What are the features and dimensions of the future Egyptian-Palestinian political and economic cooperation from the security, national, and pan-Arab points of view?

['Arafat] Let me tell you something. This Palestinian body cannot but be connected with its Arab nation, especially the loving brothers in Egypt and Jordan, its two close neighbors. We are linked with the Arab nation. Our true supporter is the Arab nation. It was no coincidence that the political negotiations were held there and the handover of authority and the entry of forces into our liberated land began from these places. It is no coincidence that the Egyptian experts provided us with great help in the economic talks, because we needed this Egyptian expertise as well as the expertise of our Jordanian brothers, who supported and extended help to us through their experts. Nothing can happen except through our agreement and reliance on this warm Arab lap on every level.

[Abu-al-Majd] The international community has promised to give you 2 billion [currency not specified] over five years after the launch of Palestinian self-rule. And we know that the Gaza Strip and Jericho are suffering a severe lack of economic potential, especially when it comes to the infrastructure. Have any of these promises been made good or is there at least a contingency plan to begin ...

['Arafat, interrupting] We have submitted a snap contingency plan worth $590 million to the World Bank. The donor parties are scheduled to meet on 1 June to look into this plan, which was agreed upon in principle in the previous Paris meeting.

We need a concerted effort, not only with the World Bank and donors, but with all our friends and brothers, because what we need is great, very great. Don't forget that all our infrastructure has been destroyed by the Israeli occupation and we must start from scratch in every area. This is a great effort and it requires huge resources but we are confident that our Arab nation and friends throughout the world together with the Palestinian people's resources can prove themselves and confront all these important responsibilities that we shoulder. "And we wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs, to establish a firm place for them in the land" [Koranic verses].

[Abu-al-Majd] When will the names of the Palestinian Authority members be announced?

['Arafat] We have announced 17 names. God willing, we will announce most of the remaining names within a week at most. This is because we will leave some names unannounced until the picture becomes complete. We might announce another three or four names. God willing, the first meeting of the National Authority, that is, the first Palestinian ministerial meeting, will be held next week. Portfolios and responsibilities will be distributed during this meeting.

[Abu-al-Majd] Will the meeting be held in Jericho or Tunis?

['Arafat] It could be held in Jericho or elsewhere.

[Abu-al-Majd] But will all the PLO institutions move with you to Jericho or will some remain in Tunis?

['Arafat] Only the political department will remain abroad. The remaining institutions will gradually move inside.

[Abu-al-Majd] Why the political department?

['Arafat] Because the Palestinian National Authority is represented in foreign relations by the PLO. It cannot establish diplomatic representation except through the PLO.

[Abu-al-Majd] Discussing the Arab situation, we do not forget the regrettable events in Yemen. These events naturally affect us all. What is your view of the situation in Yemen and will you undertake an initiative to solve this crisis?

['Arafat] I have been in constant touch with my brothers the Yemeni leaders in the past 48 hours. I have left my telephone number with my brother President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih so that he will contact me as soon as possible. We will do our best to stop the bloodbath in Arab Yemen.

[Abu-al-Majd] While we are on the phone between Cairo and Tunis, we ask Chairman Yasir 'Arafat to address the Arab and Islamic nations.

['Arafat] I want to remind my brothers of something. Once, a Soviet leader asked me: After you leave Beirut, where will you go? I told him: To Palestine. God willing, my brothers and I will go to Palestine. "On that day the believers shall rejoice. With the help of God, he helps whom he will. And he is exalted in might, most merciful." [Koranic verse] Verily, God told the truth.

[Abu-al-Majd] At the end of this interesting dialogue with Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine, we say: Thank you very much. Thank you.

['Arafat] My good wishes, thanks, and congratulations to my brother struggling President Husni Mubarak and to the Egyptian people and to my brothers in the whole Arab nation.

Sha'th Arrives on 24-Hour Visit to Gaza Strip

TA2005051594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 20 May 94

[Text] The PLO' chief negotiator, Nabil Sha'th, arrived last night in the Gaza Strip for an unannounced visit. An aide said Sha'th was making a 24-hour inspection trip.

He crossed the border from Egypt, and after a brief stop in Khan Yunus, went into conference with Palestinian officials at a Gaza sea front hotel. Sha'th said it was his first visit to Gaza Strip in 30 years. He is to hold a post on the council which is to administer Gaza and Jericho.

Brings Police Funds

JN2005115994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1050 GMT 20 May 94

[Interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, chief of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, by Sa'id Mu'addi in Gaza on 20 May—recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, first of all many happy returns on the 'Id and welcome to Gaza.

[Sha'th] I welcome you and wish you, too, many happy returns.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil, the visit is perhaps a surprise short visit to the Gaza Strip? What is the purpose of this visit?

[Sha'th] First of all, I have come to see my homeland. This is the first time I have entered Palestine since 1964. My last visit to Gaza was in 1964. Therefore, this is a chance for me, even for a few moments, to see this beloved homeland, Gaza, and its skies and land, and these great people in Gaza. That's why when the opportunity presented itself to see Gaza, I did not let it pass.

Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] wanted to reassure himself about the situation. He gave me some money that is needed by the police force in Gaza. Let us say that it is a small present so things will begin in the proper perspective and then, God willing, all necessary funds will flow when international material assistance becomes available. We will also meet with the brothers at brother Abu-'Ammar's request to see about, at least, the preliminary and necessary needs after the first week of our forces' arrival and the establishment of our authority in preparation for the arrival of brother Abu-'Ammar and the brothers in the command. God willing, I will be with them.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, how do you assess the implementation on the ground of the agreement between the Israeli and Palestinian side?

[Sha'th] With all sincerity, I see that matters are proceeding far better than in the best of expectations. Of course, I believe matters are going this well because our Palestinian people, at least here in Gaza and in Jericho, want this agreement to succeed. There is complete popular cooperation with the Palestinian police. They have adopted the police force. Let me say that the people, with their generosity and sincere national sense have adopted their soldiers and their police force. They are doing all they can to enable them carry out their duties as easily as possible. I have noticed, too, that, in reality, there are no large problems concerning coordination between the Palestinian police force and the withdrawing Israeli forces. I believe the beginning of work is positive on all levels. We hope we will be able to offer the necessary support to complete the requirements for success.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil, perhaps you do not know, but an incident took place at Erez junction. Two IDF soldiers were fired on and killed. The perpetrators fled into the autonomy area in Gaza.

[Sha'th] No doubt, there will be incidents. However, what is important is that the will should exist to overcome them and to gradually prevent all acts of violence and move toward real peace, which our people and the Israeli people undoubtedly need.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil Sha'th from Gaza, thank you very much and many happy returns, and welcome.

[Sha'th] Thank you, and through you I send greetings to all the sons of our people throughout our beloved Palestine on the 'Id and to our brothers in the Galilee, the Negev, Yafo, and everywhere.

Police Chief: Armed Jews Not To Enter Synagogue

TA1905181594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1505 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] The Palestinian police will not permit armed Jews to enter the ancient synagogue in Jericho. This was stated today by the Palestinian police commander during a visit to the site. The supreme coordinating committee on security affairs visited Jericho today to get a first-hand impression of the problems at the ancient Shalom 'Al Yisra'el synagogue. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports:

[Begin recording] [Amir] The Palestinian police have so far been unsuccessful in carrying out their duties in Jericho and the Gaza Strip. This was reported this evening by security sources. The sources assert that the situation is far more serious in the Gaza Strip. In addition to the security problems, the area is also in the midst of a crime wave with the victims being the Jewish settlers in the Gaza Strip and Israeli citizens inside the Green Line. The situation is far from satisfactory in Jericho either. The supreme coordinating committee on security affairs headed by Brigadier General Yom-Tov Sami' and General Ziyad al-Atrash held a meeting at the coordinating committee offices near the entrance to Jericho. They were accompanied by the commander in chief of the Palestinian police, Nasr Yusuf, who, speaking near the ancient synagogue in Jericho, said that his men would not permit armed Jews to enter the synagogue because according to the Cairo agreement the Palestinians were responsible for security in the vicinity of the synagogue.

The Cairo agreement does not permit armed people to visit the area. We are responsible for security in this area, Nasr Yusuf stressed. We will protect anyone visiting this place, he said. While Nasr Yusuf was speaking, armed yeshiva students were inside the synagogue. The Palestinian police commander was apparently expressing his opinion on the matter and it will be brought up for discussion before the coordinating committee on security affairs.

It should be noted that since the entry of the Palestinian police force into Jericho on 13 May, several disagreements have arisen between them and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] representatives on the coordinating committee with regard to the routes followed by the joint patrols and the interpretation of the Cairo agreement with regard to responsibility for the ancient synagogue. Joint patrols have deviated from their scheduled routes. Stationary patrols, which were meant to intervene only in specially defined cases, drove up to the gates of Jewish settlements such as Elisha' and Na'ama. Jordan Valley settlers have complained that since the inception of Palestinian Autonomy there has been a wave of thefts of agricultural equipment and produce, a mini-tractor, and even an Uzi submachine gun was stolen from the home of a resident of Tomer. Palestinian Police Commander Nasr Yusuf appealed to the residents of the Jericho autonomous area and asked them to help the Palestinian policemen to uphold law and order now that the Israeli occupation has ended forever. [end recording]

[In a similar report on Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1505 GMT on 19 May, settlement affairs correspondent Gil Litman reports that "the settlers have presented the police and the IDF with a long list of complaints concerning thefts from their settlements, especially from those adjacent to the Jericho area. For example, four days ago, someone broke into a house in the settlement of Tomer, stole the owner's Uzi submachine gun, and fled on a mini-tractor that had been parked nearby. The settlers claim that an IDF jeep pursued the thief up to the entrance to the village of al-'Awja'. Since this village is situated inside the Palestinian autonomy, the IDF soldiers broke off the chase at the village gates." The report notes that "the IDF takes a grave view of this phenomena. The local commanders, during a vociferous meeting two days ago, promised the settlers that they would take action to resolve the problem."]

Amin Al-Hindi Arrives in Gaza Strip

TA1905154694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Amin al-Hindi, who was involved in planning the murder of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympic Games in 1972, arrived in the Gaza Strip this afternoon through the Rafah border crossing.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that he was accompanied by his wife and several bodyguards. Al-Hindi is slated to be one of the commanders of the Palestinian security forces in the territories. Al-Hindi was in charge of security at the PLO offices in Tunis.

First Fatah Communique Refers to 'Israel'

NC2005063994 Paris AFP in English 0350 GMT 20 May 94

[Text] Tunis, May 20 (AFP)—The Palestinian Fatah movement—the main component of the PLO—has swapped its revolutionary rhetoric for words more suited to climate of peace.

Two weeks after the Cairo accords on Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, the traditional references to "struggle in all its forms" were replaced Thursday [19 May] by an appeal for "effort and perseverance in the building of the homeland".

A communique issued here by the Fatah revolutionary council also made history by using the name "Israel" for the first time instead of its usual "Zionist enemy".

The Fatah ruling body said that in future it would fight on a "cultural and economic" level. "That will be the real test between us and Israel," it said.

Fatah renewed its call for "unity" in Palestinian ranks and in support of "Arab brethren" during the shift from armed warfare to "realisation on the ground".

The estimated 100 members of the Fatah Revolutionary Council endorsed the accords signed in Cairo on May 4 and set up some 15 ad-hoc committees to assist the Palestinian authority in the autonomous territories, informed sources said.

Fatah holds most of the seats in the 24-member autonomous "government", 18 of whose members are already known.

The Fatah committees will be responsible for transferring 350 Palestine Liberation Organisation cadres starting next week.

Their other tasks will include assisting the Palestinian authority in its future negotiations with Israel and preparing elections to the autonomous council next autumn, the sources said.

Hamas, Others Refuse To Hand Over Weapons to Police

NC1905191194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Palestinian organizations opposed to the bargain agreement between the PLO and the Zionist entity have refused to hand over their weapons to 'Arafat's supporters in Gaza and Jericho.

Abu-Muhammad Mustafa, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] spokesman in Damascus, said that the Palestinian police must first of all disarm the Zionist occupation forces.

He added: Any person who tries to deprive us of our right to confront the enemy will be killed.

Meanwhile a spokesman for George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine announced that the front's forces will not lay down their arms as long as one Zionist soldier or settler remains in the Gaza Strip or the West Bank.

A spokesman for Nayif Hawatimah's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine also opposed disarming the Palestinian organizations. He said any Zionist settler or soldier seen in Gaza or Jericho will be killed.

Disarming Termed 'Red Line' for Police

JN1905211694 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2000 GMT 19 May 94

[From the "Panorama" program]

[Text] In Amman, Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah has said that his movement will allow nobody to disarm it as long as there is Israeli occupation. Ghawshah was commenting on statements made by Major General Nasr Yusuf, commander of the Palestinian Police, who announced in Gaza yesterday that he will organize carrying of arms in the self-rule area. Ghawshah stressed that the issue of disarming is a red line, adding that we advise the Palestinian police not to cross this line.

'Linguistic Argument' Cited Over Jihad Remarks

PM2005103294 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 May 94 p 5

[Report by Fatinah al-Dajani: "Safiyah: Emerging Palestinian Entity Modest, but Promising Start"]

[Excerpt] London—'Afif Safiyah, Palestinian delegate to the UK, has said that there is a pragmatic wing inside the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) which should be encouraged. He pointed out that the movement has so far acted "very responsibly." He said that the Palestinian entity emerging in Gaza and Jericho is a modest, but promising start.

Replying to the clamor over the content of a tape of Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat during his meeting with Muslims in a South African mosque, in which he called for jihad for the sake of Jerusalem, he said that there is always linguistic argument about the concept and meaning of the word jihad. He pointed out that 'Arafat called for jihad for the sake of Jerusalem, "that is, to strive collectively to liberate Jerusalem peacefully." Safiyah said that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin continues to speak of Jerusalem as the eternal capital of Israel. "What is important is the international will represented in the resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly, which consider Jerusalem an occupied territory from which Israel must withdraw."

In a lecture delivered in London the evening of the day before yesterday at the invitation of the "Council for Arab-British Understanding" (CABU), Safiyah dealt with a number of controversial issues on the Palestinian scene, including the peace process since the Madrid and Washington negotiations through to the Oslo and Cairo negotiations, in addition to the future of the PLO, the Palestinian economy, and Hamas. [passage omitted]

Algeria

President Zeroual Makes Defense Appointments

PM1805151294 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 May 94 pp1, 4

[Report by Qusayy Salih Darwish: "Appointments in Algerian Army To Strengthen Pro-Dialogue Trend"]

[Excerpts] President Liamine Zeroual has continued his series of changes within the Algerian Army. He has appointed Brigadier General Tayeb Darragi and Brigadier General Taghit as advisers at the Defense Ministry. The two were previously Army inspector generals. He also appointed Atiqi Lakhdar as chief of staff of the National Gendarmerie, replacing Brigadier General Ahmed Boustila, who was summoned for other duties. These appointments show that President Zeroual continues to appoint officers close to him to sensitive posts and to keep away officers opposed to his political line by giving them administrative posts as in the case of Brig. Gen. Taghit who is considered to be close to the trend opposed to dialogue. Furthermore, the removal of Boustila from the gendarmerie command will completely destroy what is left of the influence of Brigadier General Abbas Ghzayl who kept his post as Gendarmerie Commander at the last moment, after a decision had been made to dismiss him. Abbas Ghzayl's health is deteriorating and that will enable Atiqi Lakhdar to become the real commander of the National Gendarmerie which is very important to the regime as far as security is concerned. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, informed sources speak of sharp differences between the [Islamic] Salvation Front [FIS] and the Armed Islamic Groups [GIA] following the assassination of the French priest and nun which was condemned by FIS and for which the GIA claimed responsibility. According to the same sources, the dialogue between the two stopped some time ago after the more extremist "Afghan" group assumed control within the GIA. As regards the dialouge with the authorities, FIS sources emphasize that Cheiks Ali Djeddi and Abdelqadir Boukhamkham were not allowed to visit Abbasi Madani and Ali Belhadj for consultation as agreed when they were released. As a result, contacts between the FIS leaders and the regime's officials were frozen. [passage omitted]

Zeroual Reportedly Giving Up Contacts With FIS

LD1905135994 Rabat MAP in English 1334 GMT 19 May 94

[Excerpts] Algiers, May 19 (MAP)—The National Transition Council to act as a legislative body during the transition period in Algeria was officially instituted Wednesday. [passage omitted]

The Algerian dailies of this Thursday [19 May] have all commented on the president's speech noting that he had deliberately avoided to speak of dialog with all parties 'with none of them debarred'. For the dailies, President Zeroual has thus definitely given up the carrying on of contacts with the leaders of the banned 'Islamic Salvation Front' (FIS) to find a political solution to the Algerian crisis.

The National Transition Council is made up of 178 members including 12 women. The members are representing about 30 small political parties in addition to the moderate Islamist party 'HAMAS' [Islamic Society Movement] (63 seats), state institutions (30 seats) and economic and social organisations (85 seats). 27 seats are still vacant in the prospect that they will be occupied by the major political parties such as the National Liberation Front (FLN/former single party), the Front of Socialist Forces (FFS of Hocine Ait Ahmed) and the Islamic Renaissance Movement (Ennahda) that decided to boycott the council.

Authorities Report 3 Russians Killed During Attack

LD1905172894 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] A communique has been issued by the security services, which says said that yesterday, 11 people, including eight policemen and three Russian nationals, were killed after an attack against a bus which was carrying Russians near the town of Ziama Mansouria in Jijel Province. The same source adds that the group which carried out the attack was liquidated after the security forces sealed off the area. The authorities immediately informed the Russian Embassy of the incident and took all the measures required by such circumstances.

Egypt

Mubarak Urges Yemeni President To End War

NC1905184194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1745 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Cairo, 19 May (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak addressed an appeal to Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih today urging him to stop the fighting in Yemen in order to spare the blood of the Yemeni people and avert the squandering of that fraternal nation's resources in a civil war.

The president said that he continues to hope that his repeated appeals will find a sincere response and that peace will prevail in Yemen, especially in these blessed days in which Muslims are standing before God praying that He may grant them guidance, wisdom, security, and peace.

Following is the text of the president's appeal:

Like all other Arabs I have followed with great sadness and profound regret the fierce fighting in fraternal Yemen, which has been going on for nearly two weeks. This fighting is lethal to the sons of Yemen, is destroying the country's resources, and pitting the units of its armed forces against each other in a violent confrontation that cannot serve the Yemeni people's interests and objectives.

It is heart-rending to watch this bloody fighting that bodes an extensive civil war that will ruin the resources

of an Arab homeland that sorely needs stability and security. The homeland needs to devote its energies to improving the life of its people.

It is especially sorrowful that this civil strife should come at a time when the Arab nation is attempting to heal the numerous wounds caused by the consequences of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the Gulf war.

We were hoping that a new climate would arise in the Arab world, paving the way for a broad inter-Arab reconciliation, restoring inter-Arab solidarity, and reviving the hope of collective Arab action that will end the nation's current divisions. This is necessary if we want to face that challenges that will confront our Arab world at the beginning of the 21st century.

The civil strife in Yemen came abruptly, opening new wounds that would have been avoidable had the two parties begun a dialogue and agreed to reach an understanding on how to keep the armed forces outside the conflict.

We have done our utmost to prevent a clash between the two sides. Our only motive was to safeguard the supreme Arab interests.

We stressed the importance of avoiding armed clashes between the two sides and urged that their armed forces be separated so that war would not erupt. We expressed willingness to assist the two sides in settling their disputes without recourse to military force. We did this because we know that war never settles any dispute in a decisive or sound way.

It was never our aim to show bias to either party.

Our objective was to safeguard the interests of a fraternal people whose blood was mixed with the blood of Egyptians who defended the Yemeni people's right to live and make progress. Our objective was to save Yemeni unity from the risks of armed conflict and civil war that could finish off this unity and lead Yemen to fragmentation and rupture. Our objective was to save the resources of an Arab people from being wasted in fratricide, exhausting Yemen's resources and resulting in nothing but partition, bitterness, and severe loss for all parties.

It was our hope that our repeated appeals would find a sincere response from all parties, so that peace and security could prevail throughout Yemen during these blessed days when Muslim pilgrims stand on Mount 'Arafat to pray to God Almighty to grant them guidance, reason, peace, and security.

Now that the collision between troops from the two sides has entered a critical stage that portends a long war of attrition, I appeal to President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, on this blessed day when pilgrims stand on Mount 'Arafat and in the name of the constitutional legitimacy binding him, to rise above differences. In the name of the unified Yemeni people who aspire to security and stability, in the name of the Yemeni unity that could be ruined by the war, and in the name of every Arab who looks forward to a wiser and more prudent Arab world, I appeal to him to end this fratricide and save Yemeni blood from being shed in vain in a war that is hard to justify. I appeal to him to order an immediate halt to the fighting, in order to save Yemen, its fraternal people, and the goal of unity, which is the aspiration of every Yemeni. The destiny of the homeland must be placed above any other consideration, because the homeland is the core and the basis. Individuals may come and go, but a homeland means immortality and survival. This is the hour when Yemen needs everyone to rise above their wounds. I pray to God Almighty to inspire us with reason and prudence, to lead us onto the right path, and to guide us as to what is best for our nation, for He is the best master and supporter.

Musa on Christopher Talks, 'Arafat Jihad Remarks

NC1905152894 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that the situation in Yemen is regrettable. He added that no good will come of the military action, either in the near or distant future. He noted that the situation of Yemen is still on the agenda of the Arab League, adding that the Arab League Council's emergency session is still in session. Everybody, he said, is following the developments and events there.

Regarding the Syrian-Israeli peace track, the foreign minister said that diplomatic action will continue in the coming days to narrow the differences between Syria and Israel. He pointed out that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's talks in Cairo showed that differences do exist between the two sides. The talks also showed the feasibility of continuing efforts to bridge the gap as much as possible, he added.

Answering a question on Egypt's stand on the situation in Somalia, Musa said that Egypt is ready to intervene once again to reconcile the parties in Somalia in view of Egypt's status, role, and connections in consolidating unity in Somalia.

[Cairo MENA in Arabic at 1445 GMT on 19 May carries a further report on Musa's statement, which adds:

["Asked about the disagreement between the Palestinians and Israelis over Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat's remarks in Johannesburg in which he called for a jihad for the sake of Jerusalem, Musa said: There are many statements from both sides. The important thing, he added, is for these statements to serve what has been achieved and prepare the ground for the coming stages of negotiations between the two sides. He stressed that the Palestinian efforts, which we are all behind, must be directed toward giving momentum to a fruitful negotiation process to restore full Palestinian rights as part of the land for peace principle."]

Musa Views Talks on 'Partnership Agreement' With EU

NC2005102894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0850 GMT 20 May 94

[Text] Cairo, 20 May (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said today that Egypt and the EU countries have agreed to hold exploratory preliminary talks to enter a partnership agreement.

He added that the talks will involve studying a framework for new relations, especially as such frameworks have been defined between the EU and Israel and between the EU and Morocco and Tunisia. He noted that the political form of these frameworks is the same but their details differ according to each country and its interests and circumstances.

Musa said the framework will consider developments in Europe and the new concept of relations between the Mediterranean countries and Europe, between the Middle Eastern countries and Europe, and between Egypt and Europe.

Sudan Seizes Egyptian Properties in Khartoum

NC2005054894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2232 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Khartoum, 19 May (MENA)—Egyptian Ambassador to Sudan Hasan Jad-al-Haq today lodged a strongly worded protest with the Sudanese Foreign Ministry following the Sudanese authorities' seizure and closure of Egyptian buildings and clubs in Khartoum.

The Sudanese authorities today seized the Egyptian Club in Khartoum and prevented its Sudanese and Egyptian members from entering. They also seized clubs and buildings belonging to the Egyptian Irrigation Authority in Sudan and the Egyptian military attache in Khartoum.

The Sudanese authorities gave no reasons for these measures. The measures began in December 1992, when the Sudanese authorities seized Egyptian education mission schools, the Cairo University branch in Khartoum, and the Egyptian Nasir's Club in the Sudanese capital.

'Unfriendly' Policy Lamented

NC2005104294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0910 GMT 20 May 94

[Text] Cairo, 20 May (MENA)—The Egyptian Foreign Ministry last night summoned the Sudanese charge d'affaires in Cairo and informed him of its strong protest at the unacceptable and unjustified practices that primarily target Egyptian individuals and families living in Sudan.

The Foreign Ministry explained that these practices come on holy days, when Muslims everywhere celebrate the blessed 'Id al-Adha, when there is tranquility in Egyptian-Sudanese relations, and when Egypt has repeatedly stressed that it wants Sudan's territorial unity and its people's interests.

The Sudanese diplomat was informed that Egypt will find itself compelled to adopt the necessary measures and stances on the bilateral and international levels to confront this policy.

MENA has learned that the Foreign Ministry asked the Egyptian ambassador in Khartoum to lodge a similar protest and to explain the Egyptian stance on these practices in the same way the protest was conveyed to the Sudanese charge d'affaires in Cairo.

Egyptian Foreign Ministry sources have stated that both the Egyptian and Sudanese people feel regret and sadness over the Sudanese Government's continuation of its unfriendly policy, which aims to sever all ties and bonds between the two peoples and to draw a gloomy end to a long history of constructive cooperation and fruitful effort that served to deepen and consolidate everlasting bilateral relations.

The Egyptian sources stressed that despite the feelings of sorrow sparked by these unjustified Sudanese practices, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry emphasizes the following:

1. These measures will not affect the firm relations between the two fraternal Egyptian and Sudanese peoples because those who are carrying them out are a "minority"; they do not represent the Sudanese people and do not consider their traditions and real interests.

2. Egypt has always wanted to safeguard the interests of fraternal Sudan. It has expected the Sudanese Government to show the same level of responsibility.

3. Egypt hopes the Sudanese officials will reconsider their policy to safeguard their historic bilateral relations so that Egypt will not be compelled to adopt measures and a stance that so far, it has been eager not to take.

Political Parties Deny Supporting Lawyers' Protest

NC1905212494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2105 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Cairo, 19 May (MENA)—Official sources of Egypt's political parties across the political spectrum have denied allegations that they have declared their solidarity with the Egyptian Lawyers Association in connection with the events of the past two days.

The sources, speaking for the leaders of the political parties, denied issuing a statement attributed to them earlier today. The sources said it is really frightening that some people can go to such lengths, fabricate statements, and falsely attribute actions to political parties that are carrying out their roles and performing their responsibilities with total freedom within our current system of democracy.

Several political party leaders have exposed the facts about the "alleged statement". They said that a few lawyers, with well-known sympathies and linked to illegal groups, issued this statement and attributed it to the political parties.

The leaders affirmed that the entire statement is a mere calumny that contradicts the facts.

Official: Gulf States Not Aiding 'Extremist Groups'

NC1905170794 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 16 May 94 p 1

[Report by Shirin Dahruj from Port Said]

[Text] Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, has denied that the Gulf states are helping the extremist groups in Egypt. He stressed that the Gulf countries know that any harm to Egypt's security will bring harm to them.

Speaking at a seminar at the Education College in Port Said, al-Baz noted that any outside military intervention in Yemen will further complicate the crisis. He stressed that Egypt will not intervene militarily in Yemen but will hold intensive political and diplomatic contacts to end the conflict. Al-Baz cautioned against conflicts among Arab states. He noted that such conflicts would give a bad impression of the Arab nation worldwide.

Al-Baz pointed out that the notion of a Middle East market was first raised by Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres. He pointed out that before establishing a Middle East market, an Arab world must be established first.

Pakistan Extradites 'Key Terrorist' to Egypt

NC1705141094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1308 GMT 17 May 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 May (MENA)—The Egyptian security service has succeeded in bringing back a key terrorist from Pakistan, who is wanted in the Vanguards of Conquest case.

The Pakistani security authorities have apprehended terrorist 'Ali 'Id Muhammad and deported him to Egypt. He was detained today by Cairo airport authorities upon his arrival under heavy guard on an Egyptian plane from Karachi.

According to preliminary information, the terrorist left Cairo in 1990 and settled in Peshawar until he was arrested in Karachi last Saturday. The arrest of the terrorist falls within Interpol's jurisdiction to arrest Arab Afghans after the expiration of the Afghan Government's deadline for them to leave the country.

Writer on 'Gray Cloud' Over Ties With Kuwait

NC1705145994 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 13 May 94 pp 1, 3

[Article by Jalal Duwaydar: "Solidarity To Abort Foreign Funding of Terrorism"]

[Text] There may be a gray cloud over Egyptian-Kuwaiti relations as a result of some irresponsible behavior by certain groups or societies, either through good intentions or bad, on the pretext that they are working for the Islamic call, even if this conflicts with the values, principles, and tolerance of the religion. No one can actually claim that the official Kuwaiti organs are responsible for this behavior or that they know of it.

Our brilliant Kuwaiti colleague, Ahmad al-Jarallah, writer for AL-SIYASAH newspaper, wrote an article about this issue, which has been republished by AKHBAR AL-YAWM. He linked the fact that President Mubarak did not visit Kuwait on his journey home from China to the material and propaganda support the terrorist movements are getting from certain religious societies.

Perhaps al-Jarallah's analysis is correct, or perhaps it exaggerates. But there is no doubt that he supports his view well by referring to the incident in which a Kuwaiti citizen who has close links with a famous Kuwaiti Islamic society arrived in Cairo with thousands of dollars that he was going to spend in a suspicious way. He claimed that the money was to be used to publish some books.

We must praise the successes of the Egyptian security forces, which have recently taken matters into their own hands. They have succeeded in forestalling numerous terrorist acts, and in following and tracking down the leaders of this terrorism and the people who plan and support it inside and outside Egypt. Undoubtedly this is an important and necessary accomplishment to confront this criminal scheme. The objective of this scheme was to shake the stability and security of Egypt and cause seriously hurt the Egyptian people.

The fact that the security organs found large amounts of foreign currency in some terrorist dens has raised questions about its sources.

It was also natural that there is a growing conviction that there is foreign funding to buy weapons, pay agents, and spend set up and carry out terrorist crimes.

It is no secret to anyone that in some Arab countries that hide behind the cloak of Islam, the religion of justice, some groups and societies are soliciting funds from their citizens on the pretext of helping Bosnia or Afghanistan, since Islam is a just religion. But these funds are actually being used to support and bolster terrorists directly or indirectly.

In Kuwait, when meeting with Egyptian Tourism Minister Dr. Mamduh al-Biltaji and his delegation at the beginning of this week, Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad focussed on the firm Egyptian-Kuwaiti relations.

He said that under no circumstances could his country forget the kindness of Egypt and the Egyptians during the liberation war, and in fact for scores of years even before that, before God granted it its oil wealth.

He said that Egyptian teachers, engineers, doctors, and workers have contributed toward the education and medical treatment of Kuwaiti citizens. This means that Kuwait's progress and development go back to their efforts.

The amir of Kuwait added that Egypt is the heart of the Arab nation and that what befalls it, befalls the whole Arab

nation. The amir of Kuwait pointed out that terrorism and extremism have nothing to do with the true religion; extremism is a phenomenon in all religions. He affirmed that Islam has absolutely nothing to do with such behavior.

As for the heir apparent of Kuwait, Sa'd al-'Abdallah, he spoke with great zeal about the strong fraternal relations between Egypt and Kuwait. When discussion turned to the Kuwaiti citizens' enthusiasm for visiting Egypt, he said in very clear terms that the Kuwaiti Government cannot and will not allow any Kuwaiti citizen to misbehave in Egypt or to commit any act that harms its security and stability. He affirmed that the Kuwaiti Government, which he heads, is ready to take the strictest measures possible against any Kuwaiti citizen who entertains ideas of this kind or violates the law.

Actually, what the amir and heir apparent of Kuwait said in my presence confirm the importance of Arab and Islamic solidarity in containing the phenomenon of terrorism, whose objective is to weaken the Arabs and harm Islam, which is being subjected to a slander campaign by being linked to murderers, criminals, and saboteurs.

During the big party given by Khalid al-Marzuq, the great lover of Egypt and owner of AL-ANBA' newspaper, which was attended by high Kuwaiti officials in honor of Egypt and the Egyptian delegation led by Mamduh al-Biltaji, the issue of the Kuwaiti citizen arrested in Cairo with thousands of dollars was brought up. Investigators claim that he was supposed to hand it over to some terrorist elements. This came out at the party in a chat Dr. al-Biltaji had with Shaykh Khalid Sultan, head of the Kuwaiti society to which the arrested Kuwaiti citizen belongs. Shaykh Sultan tried to deny that this Kuwaiti had any ties with Egyptian terrorists. He affirmed to Dr. al-Biltaji his respect for Egypt and concern for its security and stability.

It has become well-known that terrorist operations, which Islam is being falsely accused of, are only a continuation of the campaign to attack and destroy the unity and solidarity of the Arab and Islamic nation in confronting international changes.

Perhaps the most important proof of this is that the current image that terrorism is blatant arose after the foolish Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Also, terrorism is not at all free of responsibility for sedition in fraternal Yemen, which is currently going through a bloody and terrible war, the victims of which are the Yemeni people themselves.

Switzerland Writes Off Part of Egypt's Debt

NC1605165994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1405 GMT 16 May 94

[Text] Cairo, 16 May (MENA)—The Swiss Government has decided to write off 150 million Swiss francs—230 million Egyptian pounds—of Egypt's debts to Switzerland.

Dr. Yusuf Butrus-Ghali, minister of state for international cooperation, made this statement today after a meeting with Mr. Kelin Berger, Swiss minister of state for foreign affairs [name and title as received].

Dr. Butrus-Ghali said the terms of the agreement included spending the equivalent of this amount on development projects to create additional job opportunities, and to develop projects that would contribute toward decreasing the burden of economic reform on the low-income sector.

Planning Minister on Allocations for Services

NC1505162194 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 15 May 94

[Text] Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri, deputy prime minister and minister of planning, has affirmed that the investments in the new plan for 1994-1995 amount to 35 billion pounds. From this, 12.8 billion pounds are allocated to the infrastructure. Dr. al-Janzuri, in remarks he made today after the meeting of the Planning and Budget Committee of the People's Assembly, said that the government is allocating the necessary funds to important popular projects, foremost of which are education, health, drinking water, and sewege systems. He added that during the past 10 years the government spent around 14 billion pounds on public services. The deputy prime minister and minister of planning affirmed that the government for many years has been working on allocating government expenditures to various projects.

Consultative Council Approves Development Plan

NC1705191594 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 May 94

[Text] The Consultative Council, meeting today under the chairmanship of Speaker Dr. Mustafa Kamal Hilmi, approved a bill on the economic and social development plan for 1994/1995, representing the third year of the current five-year plan.

The Council then referred the plan to the president. The People's Assembly speaker and the prime minister were also informed.

Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri, deputy prime minister and minister of planning, told the Consultative Council that the planned growth rate for the 1994/1995 economic and social development plan is 4.5 percent compared with 3.6 percent in 1993 and 2.5 percent in 1992.

The planning minister pointed out that this year's plan involves the expenditure of 7 billion pounds from the country's own resources, 1 billion pounds in the form of foreign grants, and 3 billion pounds from the National Investment Bank, the last figure representing actual savings.

Sudan

Government, Rebel Delegations Begin Peace Talks

EA1905162294 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 19 May 94

[Excerpt] Peace talks between the government and rebel delegations resumed today. A morning morning consultative session was held between the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development ministerial mediation committee and one representative from each of the three delegations attending the negotiations. The SUNA correspondent in Nairobi reports that each of the delegations has put forward a working paper to the meeting containing its views on actions to be taken by the committee to reach a peaceful solution. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Aden Said 'Almost Surrounded' by Salih Forces

NC1905132194 Paris AFP in English 1238 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Aden, Yemen, May 19 (AFP)—Northern forces of President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih tried to lay siege to this key port-city on Thursday [19 May], as the United Nations prepared to send vital aid to trapped Somali refugees.

Artillery battles were raging a few dozens kilometers (miles) of Aden, bastion of southern leader Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid, an AFP correspondent said.

Salih, quoted Thursday by the northern-run agency SABA', said his forces had scored "one victory after another against the separatist forces," in a reference to the southerners.

Aden, a port-city of half a million, was "almost surrounded" following two weeks of civil war, a northern spokesman in the capital Sanaa earlier told AFP.

But he said the objective was not to enter the city, so as "to avoid war on the streets, but to put it under blockade, to bomb military targets," in order to force al-Bid and his aides "to surrender or quit the country."

Southerners have insisted Aden was well defended and they can keep the northerners at bay. Fighting was still going on for control of the key air base of al-'Anad, north of here.

Meanwhile, the United Nations said it was to send a food convoy to a camp in southern Yemen where thousands of Somali refugees who fled their own civil war are trapped in crossfire.

Rolf Guldberg, UN High Commissioner for Refugees representative in Sanaa, told AFP the Somalis were in an "active war zone" and the convoy could only leave once fighting subsided.

The refugees were either still in the al-Qud camp on a beach near Zinjibar, 50 kilometers (32 miles) northeast of Aden, or were sheltering at a nearby village, he said.

The region has been the scene of fierce fighting and hundreds of the Somalis have reportedly been killed in crossfire, while the plight of the remainder was grim.

The current republic of Yemen was created on May 22, 1990, with the merger of the former conservative North and Marxist South states.

Al-Bid on Wednesday hinted for the first time that the two-week old war could cause the south to break away.

"After all these massacres and these sacrifices, I don't know how we are going to live together again," al-Bid told the London-based Saudi Middle East Broadcasting Television.

"I don't know what direction we will finally take but I can tell you that it was 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih who has proclaimed secession in declaring war."

Neither side nor the International Committee of the Red Cross have so far issued a casualty toll.

But ICRC official in Sanaa Arnold Luethold told AFP his organisation had counted a large number of POWs on both sides.

Foreigners Try To Flee Aden as Fighting Nears

NC1905203194 Paris AFP in English 1709 GMT 19 May 94

[By Henri Mamarbachi]

[Text] Aden, Yemen, May 19 (AFP)—Foreigners desperate to escape Aden crowded the docks in the baking sun Thursday [19 May], as the rival Yemeni armies battled their way into a third week of civil war.

The struggle between President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's northern troops and those of his southern rival Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid was concentrated for the fourth day running on al-'Anad, a giant air base 60 kilometres (36 miles) north of here.

An AFP correspondent reported that al-Bid's troops were defending the base from its southern perimetre against onslaughts from northern rivals on the other side in a battle which has become the focal point of the war.

There were heavy artillery exchanges around the base and in nearby mountains and automatic weapons fire could be heard from inside.

Aid workers also reported heavy fighting further east at Abyan, where around 100 wounded were admitted to hospitals on Thursday alone.

Foreigners still stranded in al-Bid's stronghold Aden flocked to the docks desperate for a boat passage out, with all roads to the north blocked and the airport closed. About 300 arrived early to complete lengthy customs regulations.

One group was trying to get aboard a Russian ship ready to set off, and the others had been impatiently waiting since the beginning of the week for an Indian boat to unload its cargo of corn.

"Each morning we come here, we wait and in the evening we return to our hotel," one of them said.

The Russian consul and his Chinese counterpart, the only two diplomats still remaining in the city, were trying to process their nationals as the temperature climbed to 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit).

A Belgian businessman, known to everyone just as Patrick, was trying to deal with all the other foreign nationals, mainly Indians, Americans, Iranians and Belgians as well as a few Yemenis.

The fighting around Aden was jeopardising plans to send a UN relief convoy to Somali refugees trapped in crossfire at the al-Kawd camp on a beach near Zinjibar, 50 kilometers (32 miles) northeast of the city.

Rolf Guldberg, UN High Commissioner for Refugees representative in Sanaa, said the camp was in a "war zone" and supplies would only be sent once fighting eased. He hoped it would set off from Sanaa in the next few days.

The United Nations had no precise figure on the total number of Somali refugees or casualties but would be trying to provide food for 4,000, the estimated number there before the Yemeni civil began on May 5.

The refugees say hundreds have died in the crossfire.

The Somalis fled to Yemen to escape the civil war which erupted in their Horn of Africa country three years ago, but have now found themselves caught up in a new conflict.

Hundreds of refugees meanwhile flooded into Aden fleeing fighting in the surrounding mountains and countryside.

The United Nations said there were at least 1,500 in Aden, and it was providing them with food.

Meanwhile, a senior official from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said they had already started to visit prisoner of war camps, and hoped to complete the inspections next week.

Arnold Luethold, regional ICRC director for the Arabian peninsula, gave no precise figure for war casualties or internees but said they had counted hundreds of POWs.

Two Scud Missiles Hit Aden Airport, Residential Area

NC2005061894 Paris AFP in English 2347 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Aden, May 20 (AFP)—Two ground-to-ground SCUD missiles ripped into the southern Yemeni capital Aden late Thursday [19 May], injuring four people, according to hospital sources, in the first missile strike on the city since civil war broke out on May 5.

One of the missiles hit the airport and the other landed in a residential area in the northeast of the city.

A spokesman for the city's main al-Thawrah hospital said the four casualties it had received had been hurt in the attack on the airport, adding that the injured from the other attack had not yet been brought in for treatment.

The attacks triggered panic in the southern suburbs, as residents took shelter on the lower floors and in the stairwells of apartment blocks, an AFP correspondent on the scene said.

Deputy tourism Minister Yahya 'Abd-al-Qawi, a senior official of the Yemeni Socialist Party, the main political force in the south, told AFP a missile had hit the hulk of a Soviet-era Antonov transport plane standing well away from the main runways.

'Abd-al-Qawi, who had visited the scene, said he was not sure if anybody had been injured in the strike.

Fire broke out in the area, and the plume of smoke could be seen from the nearby hotel where most of the Western journalists covering the civil war are staying. Soldiers turned backed journalists who tried to get to the scene.

Witnesses said the al-Badr barracks, where Aden's anti-aircraft battery crews are garrisoned, as well as the Aden peninsula, where the officers club is situated, had been hit, although it was not known if the club itself had been damaged.

The second missile slammed into the Jabal Shams residential district, 'Abd-al-Qawi said, without giving further details.

Ambulances and fire engines were still coming and going one hour after the attacks.

Northern troops consolidated their positions to the north of the city with firefights and hand-to-hand fighting Thursday, casualties said.

They have been tightening the noose around the city since they took the main al-'Anad airbase some 50 kilometres (30 miles) to the north on Monday.

On the eastern front, mortar shells fell Thursday on the first control post on the outskirts of the city, some 10 kilometres (six miles) from the city centre, journalists said.

A southern source said the policy-making bodies of the Yemeni Socialist Party were meeting Thursday evening to finalise plans to set up a High Council of National Salvation, which he said would function as a kind of government.

The idea was floated after the fall of al-'Anad on Monday, when 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Jifri, who heads a bloc of five opposition parties, said the council would function wherever it had influence, and would not constitute a government of South Yemen.

Conservative North Yemen and the formerly Marxist South Yemen merged in May 1990 to form a new republic, but their armies were never integrated, and Vice-President Salim al-Bid, a southerner, left the joint capital Sanaa last August for Aden, complaining of inadequate power-sharing.

A well-informed southern source said Thursday that al-Bid left Aden two days ago for Hadramut province near the Omani border, some 600 kilometres (372 miles).

The northerners have demanded that al-Bid surrender and stand trial for treason.

Sanaa Statement Reports Advance on 'Abyan-Aden Axis'

JN2005050994 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0334 GMT 20 May 94

[Text] A military source at the Ministry of Defense has stated that Armed Forces' units continued their advance yesterday along the al-'Anad-al-Hawtah axis, crossed all barriers, and confronted air sorties by the forces of apostasy and secession. The air defenses forced the aircraft to retreat and flee, downing one aircraft over the al-'Anad airport.

The forces of unity, democracy, and the protection of Constitutional legitimacy managed to seize 62 T-55 tanks in the mountainous paths outside the al-'Anad base, several kilometers away on the southern front between al-Hawtah and the al-'Anad base, after these tanks managed to flee the base the day before yesterday. These tanks were seized by the fist of legitimacy and the hands of our courageous and devoted forces. Our forces also managed to seize one 130-mm Howitzer gun battalion during the units' advance from the al-'Anad base toward the town of al-Hawtah.

On the Abyan-Aden axis, the valiant Armed Forces' units continued their advance, and completed the tight siege of the set targets, from the eastern and northern sides of Aden, after inflicting great losses on the gangs of the rebellious secessionist forces and forcing them to retreat toward the final places of suffocation.

The eagles of the air in the Air Force carried out the missions assigned to them in their combat sorties, and scored direct and destructive hits against the set military targets in a number of collapsing dens of the rebellious secessionist forces.

Judging from the outcome of the field confrontation of the forces of apostasy and secession, all field, psychological, and moral signs about the rebellious gangs of the secessionists confirm the extent of the grave disappointment and the feelings of disgrace and bitter frustration overwhelming the secessionists and guiding their interpretations and rancorous conduct toward both themselves and all those surrounding them. This is also revealed by the secessionists' despicable cries and their distorted and desperate media statements.

In another development, the military source said there is a daily increase in the numbers of officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers, misled by the gang of rebellion and secession in the [Yemeni] Socialist Party's leadership, who are joining our valiant Armed Forces, the forces that protect unity and champion both Constitutional legitimacy and democracy, after seeing the real infernal scheme to which they were pushed by the secessionist gang. This scheme leads to death and to the furnace of a losing war.

The Yemeni News Agency, SABA', has learned that 250 officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers from the remaining elements of the 'Abbud Brigade, who fled from the al-Dali' District, returned to the district and joined the forces of unity and legitimacy stationed in al-Dali' District. They expressed their denunciation of the hideous crime committed by the secessionist gang by initiating war in the homeland and pushing the sons of the Armed Forces and the comrades in arms into the furnace of bloody fighting. They also asserted their readiness to carry out the national duty in the ranks that champion unity and legitimacy. They were welcomed by their colleagues in our Armed Forces, the forces of unity and legitimacy.

Aden Communique Reports Success of Operations

EA1905164094 Aden Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 19 May 94

[Military Communique No. 23 issued by the Defense Ministry]

[Text] Our heroic armed forces continued their operations with high morale yesterday and today. They succeeded in foiling repeated assaults by the forces of the al-Ahmar gang, and delivered deadly blows to those forces in the depths of their defensive positions, with the help of almighty God and by virtue of the determination of the fighters, who arise from the just cause they are defending and their certainty of winning a clear victory.

As this military communique was being written, our forces were delivering crushing blows to the hostile forces in the area around Kirsh, inflicting vast casualties, and forcing them to retreat and surrender. On the Abyan axis, our heroic forces are continuing their pursuit of remnants of hostile forces, and are mopping up the remaining pockets of resistance.

This morning our forces foiled every desperate assault made by units from the scattered hostile forces. Our forces inflicted major defeats on these forces, to the satisfaction of our heroic fighters and the good and loyal inhabitants of Abyan, who face the prospect of certain victory in this destructive war—unleashed against our people in the southern governorates by the bloody, fascist al-Ahmar gang.

Al-'Attas Denies Fall of al-'Anad Air Base

EA1905201394 Aden Yemeni Republic Radio Network in English 1600 GMT 19 May 94

[Excerpt] Engineer Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, the prime minister, said that the al-'Anad base is still under the control of our Armed Forces and that brutal fighting had taken place in the past days and the pro-al-Ahmar gang forces had been turned away. He indicated that 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih had plunged a large number of people into these bloody battles. Al-Attas was talking to the BBC last night. [passage omitted]

Salih Addresses Troops at al-Nasr Military Camp

JN1905182694 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman and supreme commander of the Armed Forces, today visited the al-Nasr Camp. He was received by the brother camp commander, officers, NCO's, and soldiers. The brother chairman, the supreme commander of the Armed Forces, was briefed on the progress of training and preparation at the camp.

Addressing the brother officers, NCO's, and soldiers, the brother chairman praised the valiant Armed Forces' heroic role to support the people's will and defend the homeland and democracy against all threats and challenges that have been imposed by the rebellious, secessionist gang in the Yemeni Socialist Party's [YSP] leadership which threw the brother camp commander, officers, NCO's, and soldiers into the furnace of war and imposed it on our people in order to implement its secessionist plan and fragment the homeland.

He stressed: Unity has existed to survive and to be entrenched in the state of affairs and life of the homeland. It is our people's destiny and fate, and they will never relinquish it. He noted that our people and their Armed Forces, who offered dear sacrifices for the sake of the Yemeni revolutions of 26 September and 14 October, and for their triumph, are today making sacrifices for the sake of protecting and entrenching unity. He stressed that Yemen will have no future or stability without unity, and that secession and the attempts to go back to the pre-22 May 1990 era are impossible. He said that the people and their Armed Forces will not allow this and will confront the secessionists resolutely and strongly.

The brother president pointed to what is being achieved by our valiant Armed Forces, the forces of unity, legitimacy, and democracy, in terms of success in accomplishing their tasks and national duties to deter the rebelling, secessionist forces, to abort their secessionist plan, and to force them to submit to the will of the people and to recognize constitutional legitimacy. He pointed out that this is taking place thanks to God and to our Yemeni people's support, who are rallying around their valiant Armed Forces throughout the Yemeni homeland in Shabwah, Abyan, Aden, Ta'izz, Hadhramaut, al-Mahrah, Sa'dah, Hajjah, al-Hudaydah, Sanaa, and Dhamar.

The brother chairman of the Presidential Council called on the personnel who were misled by the rebelling, secessionist gang in the YSP leadership to join the ranks of their brothers and comrades-in-arms in the Armed Forces in order to prove their patriotism and faithfulness to the homeland by standing in the trench of unity, revolution, and democracy. He wondered whether these misled people want to fight and die for the sake of a handful of conspiratorial secessionists who led the homeland to this abyss for the sake of achieving personal interests and devastating selfish whims. He added: To those misled people we say, you are now facing a test, either you join the ranks of right or the ranks of falsehood. It is either you be with your people, homeland, and unity, or with a handful of conspirators who did not fear God in their actions against the homeland and people, and involved the sons of the one homeland and the comrades-in-arms in the Armed Forces in this bloody fighting which they did not want. However, this criminal gang has imposed it on our Yemeni people and the Armed Forces.

He noted that our Yemeni people are proud of their sons in the Armed Forces, who are now waging the battle of honor and martyrdom in defense of unity and democracy, and to eliminate the threats and dangers posed by the rebelling, secessionist gang.

The brother president urged the brother soldiers, NCO's, and officers to be alert, disciplined, and ready to perform the sacred national duty at all times and under all circumstances.

The brother president, the supreme commander of the Armed Forces, was accompanied by brother Staff Colonel 'Ali Muhammad Salah, deputy chief of staff for operations.

YSP Officials Visit Troops on the Battlefield

EA1905200794 Aden Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] The brother members of the Yemeni Socialist Party Political Bureau are currently paying field visits to a number of battlefronts, and to the leadership of the forces defending unity, democracy, and modernization, which are pursuing the forces of the al-Ahmar clan's gang [words indistinct].

The Yemeni news agency, SABA', has learned that the visits by the brother members of the political bureau to the battlefront are being made in order to implement a recently made decision by that same organization. The soldiers of the units defending unity and democracy have expressed great satisfaction and appreciation concerning these visits, and with this wise and sincere decision made during these hard times, which were brought about by the criminal and oppressive war imposed on the Yemeni people by the bloody al-Ahmar gang, which has turned the southern and eastern governorates into their battlefields.

Basindwah Interviewed on Crisis, Yemeni Unity

NC2005100494 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 16 May 94 p 7

[Report on interview with Foreign Minister Muhammad Basindwah by correspondent Yusuf al-Sharif; place and date not given]

[Text] [Al-Sharif] I held a long dialogue with Yemeni Foreign Minister Muhammad Basindwah on the massive

disaster besetting his country and its unitary experiment, which is facing a difficult test. Indeed, the dialogue was interrupted by telephone conversations with the military command, the Foreign Ministry, and Interior Minister Yahya al-Mutawakkil in Sanaa to follow up on the raging battles in Yemen and their domestic and foreign repercussions.

After war broke out between the forces of what were two parts of the country, why did President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih turn down the Arab mediation offers to contain the deteriorating situation in Yemen and the Arab League's offer to send forces to disengage the two warring factions?

[Basindwah] Let me first explain the situation. When 'Ali Salim al-Bid secluded himself in Aden in the middle of August, we accepted all national, Arab, and international mediation offers to persuade him to return to perform his duties in Sanaa. We even accepted all his personal conditions to return and agreed on all the proposals and formulas proposed by the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] to resolve the political crisis. President Salih and the People's Congress agreed without reservation because our main objective was to preserve the Yemeni unity for which the people struggled. Since unity was established in May 1990 the YSP leadership has continued its political pressure and blackmail to gain more posts, influence, and funds. Despite this, our response was immediate, appreciating the YSP's choice of merger, its ceding leadership in the south after 23 years of rule, and because we wanted the unity process to continue as it started, with the integration of the unified political will of the People's Congress and the YSP. Regrettably, despite the success in merging the official state's institutions in both parts of Yemen, the YSP continued for four years to place obstacles before the merger of the Armed Forces, although the General Command of the Northern and Southern Armed Forces and the post of defense minister were given to the YSP so that it might not evade responsibility or claim that the merger was hindered by the People's Congress during and after the transitional stage. The YSP hindered the merging of the two Armed Forces so that it would remain in control of the command of the Southern Forces and use this card to blackmail, pressure, and terrorize anyone who rejected total obedience in the provinces of the South, as was the case when it ruled the South.

[Al-Sharif] Do you believe that the continuing separation of the Armed Forces was the main factor behind the political crisis and its aggravation?

[Basindwah] In the pluralistic democratic formula that the YSP called for as a framework for unity, it was politically unacceptable to remain a partner in the government with sovereignty and legislative and executive powers and at the same time play the role of opposition to the constitutional and legitimate regime of the unified state. Logically, it had to choose between siding with the government or the opposition. But al-Bid chose a duplicitous stance and rejected all the solutions put forward by the mediators to heal the rift and ease the political crisis through dialogue with President Salih or between the two parties or among the tripartite ruling coalition that includes the Reform Grouping. From his seclusion in Aden, he persisted in increasing the differences. The People's Congress called for a comprehensive national dialogue on the causes of the crisis and its negative repercussions and to find a way to emerge from the labyrinth created by the YSP. The participants in the dialogue worked out the Pledge and Accord Document with the participation of all parties in the government and opposition and public figures. I would like to ask you if al-Bid returned to Sanaa to take the constitutional oath as vice president, for which the agreement in Amman provides. Why have the YSP ministers and deputies retrenched in Aden? What is their goal and purpose?

[Al-Sharif] I am afraid I cannot answer that question; the Yemenis know more about their affairs than anybody else.

[Basindwah] They leaked their intention to return to the days of partition three and a half years after the establishment of unity, in an unexpected statement by Salim Salih, the YSP's assistant secretary general. Salih dropped a bombshell by proposing federation as a substitute to merger unity. They threatened that if we reject federation, we may regret it later on. Naturally we rejected it because unity came to rectify an error and handle conspiracies that were not created by the Yemeni people. Unity also affirmed a fact that was known on the ground and in the history books, namely, that we are one people. It was not a unity between two peoples, two parties, and two countries, as was the case in the unity between Egypt and Syria. You know that throughout Yemen the entire people, even simple-minded people, refused to refer to the North and South before the establishment of unity. We used to say the southern part and the northern part.

[Al-Sharif] We are past this stage now. In the absence of reason and dialogue, the military option has triumphed over the political options that were always available, even in the darkest moments. Egypt has been a major partner in supporting the 26 September revolution in the North and 14 October in the South. It has sacrificed thousands of its best men and supplied Yemenis with weapons, which we imported with our own money, and technical experts to modernize Yemen so that it could restore its past glory. On this basis, we have a right to ask: Why did you get involved in the military option?

[Basindwah] It is my right and duty to admit with pride and honor Egypt's military, political, and cultural role. Were it not for this role, the fate of our revolution would have been similar to earlier revolutions and uprisings in Yemen, which were wiped out after a few weeks or days, simply because our Arab brothers ignored our legitimate humanitarian desire for liberation and freedom. But what do you have to say about the Scuds that the YSP troops are now firing at random against Sanaa, Ta'izz, and Dhamar? Is the murder of dozens of defenseless

civilians and the destruction of homes and vital installations the practical embodiment of the plan of the cultural modernization of the unified state of Yemen, about which the YSP leadership has been bragging?

[Al-Sharif] Didn't the Northern Army carry out similar military operations against civilians in Aden and other Southern governorates?

[Basindwah] We challenge the YSP to prove any military act committed by the Armed Forces of the unified state against civilians. These were the strict orders of President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih in his capacity as the supreme commander. I would like to correct many of the mistakes persistently made by the media organs of the YSP and the external forces that support its conspiracy with regard to the military plan to extend the authority of the constitutional legitimacy of the state of unity throughout the country. This plan does not place the seizure of Aden at the head of its priorities; it merely seeks, in what I am at liberty to say, to lay siege to its approaches, exit points, and roads leading to it. As for the collapse of the secessionist clique in the YSP, which is fortifying itself inside Aden, this is the job and responsibility of the people and the unionist leaders and elements in the YSP and its Armed Forces. Our wager is on the people's adherence to unity and on the suffering and oppression that have pained them under the fascist and totalitarian rule of the Southern part.

[Al-Sharif] We have not settled the issue of who is responsible for starting the fighting and choosing the military option.

[Basindwah] The conspiracy scenario began to be implemented immediately after the Pledge and Accord Document was signed in Amman. We were surprised by a ferocious attack by the YSP's Armed Forces on the al-'Amaliqah Brigade, which was stationed in the Abyan area in the Southern governorates. The attack failed. The president, who is also supreme commander, made a strenuous effort to contain the military crisis provoked by the YSP's separatist leaders. They provoked it after their political efforts to repartition the country failed. Several days later they provoked another military clash in the Harf area in the Northern governorates and failed again. They repeated these military tactics near Shabwah's oil fields in the Southern governorates. These battles were limited to offensive action by their side and moves to repulse them by the legitimate forces. Earlier it was possible to contain any attempts to expand the fighting and handle the issue by political methods, regarding what had happened as a mere escalation of tension. This situation continued until the YSP forces carried out an all-out offensive in the 'Imran area. It was a criminal, separatist, premeditated attack.

[Al-Sharif] The reports on who began the fighting in 'Imran were conflicting.

[Basindwah] Fortunately, or unfortunately, the Yemeni military committee that includes Jordanian and Omani officers and the U.S. and French military attaches was carrying out its duties in the 'Imran camp at the time. This committee is more competent and reliable than other parties in giving testimony and pointing an accusing finger at the guilty side. The committee members had a miraculous escape when fighting erupted between the 2d Armored Brigade, which receives its orders from the YSP separatists, and a brigade serving under the legitimate command. The 2d Brigade's commander fired several shots as a sign to begin the fighting. The brigade under the legitimate command took no heed and refused to fire back. Mujahid al-Kahhali, a reserve officer who leads a so- called corrective movement and who was in the camp without having official business there, detonated a highly explosive charge. This caused confusion and the two brigades clashed, destroying each other in hours. The military committee could not contain the situation. The president immediately visited the wounded from both brigades and supervised the aerial transfer of seriously wounded troops to a medical center in Jordan. He announced that the wounded troops from both sides were Yemenis and that their plight pained the entire nation. He said the dead troops were martyrs of a united Yemen and ordered compensation of 20,000 rials for every dead officer of the YSP brigade and 10,000 rials for every dead soldier. He also ordered that new weapons and ammunition be issued to those who survived, giving them leave from duty until after the 'Id al-Adha feast. But the premeditated political crisis resurfaced in the Dhamar area. A YSP commander ordered the units of the Ba Suhayb Brigade to deploy outside the camp with their tanks and large and medium-caliber guns. This was a blatant violation of the agreement reached within the military committee and constituted disobedience of the orders issued by Staff Brigadier General Haytham Qasim Tahir, defense minister, commander of the Armed Forces, and a YSP official. The brigade commander subjected the city of Dhamar to tension and apprehension. I carried out several contacts with the defense minister in Aden—most YSP ministers were by now living there until the situation cleared up—but his brother the commander of the Ba Suhayb Brigade maintained his attitude and insisted on deploying outside the camp. At 2010 on a Wednesday evening two weeks ago we were with the president at the Presidential Palace in Sanaa when he received an urgent telephone call from the Army General Command reporting that the brigade had opened fire on a Republican Guard battalion stationed on the other side of Dhamar and that the city's main electric power plant had been destroyed. The president, in his capacity as supreme commander, issued an order to both sides to observe a cease-fire. He also ordered the Republican Guard battalion not to return the brigade's fire but to take precautionary measures.

[Al-Sharif] Information has it that the Ba Suhayb Brigade observed the cease-fire.

[Basindwah] Yes. The two sides observed the cease-fire for a short time. But 45 minutes later a ferocious attack with tanks, armored vehicles, and artillery was launched

against 1,200 officers and men of the Central Security Forces in Aden who carried only light weapons. This was a brutal act of extermination in full view of the public. The YSP forces launched a second brutal offensive against an armored brigade under legitimate command in the Radfan area. The situation erupted and it became impossible to control the synchronized attacks in most areas, all of which were part of the separatist conspiracy. Some YSP forces joined the legitimate forces, other YSP forces fled, and some are still fighting. No one is saying this side won and that side was defeated. All are Yemenis and the loss is the entire country's loss. It is difficult to replace troops and weapons.

[Al-Sharif] Don't you think the president has the necessary powers as supreme commander to order a cease-fire so as to avoid further casualties and destruction and before the fighting turns into a full-scale North-South civil war? Some enemies of Yemen would like to attribute a sectarian nature to this strife, saying that it is a conflict between the [Shiite] Zaydi tribes and the [Sunni] Shafi'ites.

[Basindwah] Civil war always occurs between two groups of the same nation or even between two sects. This is what Yemen's enemies hope for. But Yemen is united now in a state made legitimate by popular referendum. The people were unanimous in choosing unity and a single constitution. I believe things will return to normal in a few days, that the conspiracy will fail, and that those who plotted against unity and constitutional legitimacy will stand trial.

[Al-Sharif] What is the aim of your diplomatic tour, which began in Cairo and took in Jordan, Syria, and the Gulf countries, after the president rejected mediation and turned down the Arab League's offer to send Arab forces to disengage the two warring sides?

[Basindwah] Arab and foreign mediation was required during the political crisis when the YSP was keeping its conspiracy against unity, constitutional legitimacy, and the elected government under wraps. Mediation now should focus on persuading the rebellious conspiring group to accept the legitimate authority and listen to the call of reason and democracy. This is why the government has declared that what is happening is a domestic Yemeni affair. Those who wish to carry out good offices must help us to control the situation and preserve the country's unity. They must not deal with those officials who have lost their legal status.

[Al-Sharif] I would like to remind you of Yemen's position during the Gulf crisis. Yemen urged an inter-Arab solution.

[Basindwah] Yes, that was our position. We still want an Arab solution that will defend constitutional legitimacy, maintain our unity and sovereignty, and safeguard our nation. This is why we turned down the offer to have Arab forces sent to us, because what is happening—as I said—is an internal Yemeni affair. The disengagement of forces would mean recognizing the separatist rebels as an independent entity. We have responded to every mediation effort and agreed to make every possible concession. But the conspirators have always backed down and refused to implement the agreements. They insisted on the return of the YSP forces to the South and the return of the legitimate forces to the North. This was an introduction to their declared secession. We knew of this conspiracy from the beginning. We rejected it politically. They tried then to make it a fact by military secession.

[Al-Sharif] Does this mean the abolition or dissolution of the YSP?

[Basindwah] Certainly not, because Yemen has chosen democracy and pluralism. We are discussing a certain dictatorial and secessionist group. But this does not mean the YSP leadership has no elements who support unity, adhere to legitimacy, reject hegemony, and believe in democracy. The decision to dismiss the vice president was adopted with the unanimous legal vote of the House of Representatives, including YSP representatives. The same applies to the dismissal of Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, who suddenly and without the permission of the president traveled to the United States, where he spent four days in hospital on the pretext of receiving treatment. He and his entire family are now enjoying themselves in the parks of Florida. The same goes for the dismissal of the Aden governor and the defense minister, who are the heads of the sedition. As for the dismissal of the petroleum minister, he is accused of stealing over $350 million in oil royalties. These dismissed officials will be replaced by other honest YSP elements.

[Al-Sharif] The telephone rang and the Yemeni foreign minister lifted the headset and started a long conversation with the General Command in Sanaa, the Foreign Ministry, and the Interior Ministry. He asked about the military situation, affirming that his meeting with President Husni Mubarak was positive and that the Egyptian Foreign Ministry constantly briefs him on the current situation in Yemen. I asked him if I could speak with Interior Minister Yahya al-Mutawakkil. I asked al-Mutawakkil about the widespread rumors of the arrests of YSP officials in North Yemen. Al-Mutawakkil said: These are seditious rumors by the YSP. Only very few people were arrested to secure the rear of the legitimate forces when accusations of provocation and political mobilization were proved against them. Among those arrested is 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Saqqaf, chief editor of the YEMEN TIMES, who published seditious and alarming statements that 12,000 people were killed in the fighting, while news agency correspondents and the statements issued in Aden and Sanaa put the dead in the hundreds. Al-Mutawakkil said: We hope to end the state of emergency once the fighting stops and the constitutional legitimate authority imposes its authority throughout Yemen. The overall security situation is reassuring. The indiscriminate shelling of Sanaa and Ta'izz by Scud missiles has alarmed the people but has increased their

determination to confront those who rebel against unity and those who plot against constitutional legitimacy.

I asked Basindwah about the course of the fighting in light of his conversation with the General Command in Sanaa.

[Basindwah] The legitimate forces are now besieging Aden at Dar Sa'd near the Shaykh 'Uthman quarter and at al-'Alam and al-'Anad, 50 km from Aden. The fall of Aden is a matter of time, because we want to preserve the life of the inhabitants and the vital installations.

[Al-Sharif] And what about foreign reaction to the events in Yemen?

[Basindwah] Diplomatic and security reports indicate that ships have arrived at Aden and Diya' al-Mukalla carrying weapons from particular states.

[Al-Sharif] Which states?

[Basindwah] We refuse to accuse anyone until we have tangible evidence. Generally speaking, the YSP has received arms consignments from East countries, including Bulgaria. These weapons were paid for from the $250 million in the Treasury of the Southern part before the days of unity.

[Al-Sharif] We are afraid that rumors and misleading reports leaked to Sanaa and Aden are designed to worsen the military situation.

[Basindwah] Can we deny that a consignment was seized in al- Hudaybah before the fighting started? The consignment contained military communications equipment and listening devices. From where did they bring the money? That is the question.

[Al-Sharif] In a statement to a London-based Arab television station during the political crisis, President Salih said some sides paid to create the crisis.

[Basindwah] But he refused to name the sides that pay.

[Al-Sharif] Reportedly, Sudanese and Iraqis are fighting alongside the forces of legitimacy.

[Basindwah] I will tell you of an incident showing the failure of the tendentious YSP propaganda: Nasir al-Sabili, the dismissed governor of Aden, announced the arrest of a group of people affiliated with the Egyptian al-Jihad organization and claimed that the General People's Congress objected to their extradition to Egypt. Egyptian Ambassador in Sanaa 'Ata Harun was contacted and he assigned the Egyptian consul to investigate. Meanwhile, the interior minister officially ordered the Aden governor to hand over the detained group to the Egyptian security authorities without any conditions or restrictions. But in Aden, the Egyptian consul discovered that the whole issue was a fabrication and that no arrests had been made. This is how the YSP uses its propaganda to incite the world against the legitimate authority. We challenge them to produce one Sudanese or Iraqi fighting within the ranks of the legitimate forces.

This fact was confirmed by Ambassador Badr Hammam, Egypt's envoy to Yemen, during the political crisis. In my meeting with President Husni Mubarak to explain the situation in Yemen, Ambassador Hammam testified that Sanaa is innocent of those accusations. Similar rumors were disseminated during the Gulf war, with fabricated reports that Iraqi planes sought shelter in Yemen. Regrettably, the other day I read an article by an Egyptian writer claiming that 50,000 Iraqis remained in Yemen after the Gulf war and are now fighting against the forces of the YSP. What are foreign embassies and news agency correspondents doing in Yemen? Have they said anything to support these allegations? We must wonder about the motives and the mission of Salim Salih [a YSP official], who arrived in London before the military action and who is still there. And we must ask what Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas is doing in the United States. He said his mission was to try to get a cease-fire. So, did he know the YSP would soon ignite the war?

[Al-Sharif] The YSP has accused the constitutional government of importing chemical and biological weapons before the war broke out.

[Basindwah] This accusation deserves no response because it denies itself by itself. If it had been true, the United States would have announced it and imposed international sanctions on us.

[Al-Sharif] By the way, how do you assess the U.S. position toward the disaster of the fighting in Yemen?

[Basindwah] The United States has announced that it is eager for Yemeni unity, not out of fear for its economic and strategic interests in Yemen, because these are safe, but because it is no longer in conflict with any other superpower now that the Soviet Union has collapsed and the Cold War and the policy of polarization have ended. The United States believes that unity is a factor of stability, security, and peace in the Arabian Peninsula. Divisions have always been a cause of tension and unrest. The Americans praised and valued our options for democracy and pluralism and they sent a high-ranking official to congratulate Yemen on successfully emerging from the experience of free and peaceful elections. In the oilfields, U.S. companies are continuing their activity, digging, building pipelines, and exporting oil regularly and efficiently. This perhaps explains our reassurance that the United States remains concerned about Yemeni unity.

[Al-Sharif] But statements by the U.S. assistant secretary of state, which he made in the Gulf after his visit to Yemen and the eruption of fighting there, were interpreted by some observers as a change in the U.S. position toward unity.

[Basindwah] He only answered correspondents' questions following his visit to Yemen. His answers were his

personal interpretation of the progress of military operations and he did not commit the U.S. Government to them. Naturally, some observers are optimists, others are pessimists; some are realistic and credible in their analyses while others are not.

Cabinet Discusses Ministries' Working Plan

JN1905132594 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] The Council of Ministers resumed its meetings today under Acting Prime Minister Dr. Muhammad Sa'id al-'Attar.

The Council resumed discussion of the detailed working plan of all sectors of work and production in the various economic, social, administrative, financial, security, and media fields. The plan also deals with all the ministries' responsibilities of following up all the facilities and institutions supervised by them.

The Council discussed means to reactivate these ministries' work and to tackle all the disorder caused by the gang of secession, rebellion, and apostasy in the leadership of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] as part of its policy to sabotage unity, democracy, and constitutional legitimacy in the country.

The Council endorsed all the proposals and tasks assigned to all the government quarters in this regard. The Council also decreed that the government shall shoulder the additional flight insurance in order to secure the return of citizens from abroad to the country, particularly the sick, students, and those who left the country for work purposes.

The Council listened to the foreign minister's report on his recent tour of a number of fraternal Arab countries.

Al-Zandani Discusses Crisis With U.S. Envoy, Others

JN1905184494 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani, member of the Presidential Council, today received brother (Muhammad 'Ali Bila), ambassador of the State of Eritrea in Sanaa, at the end of his tour of duty in our country.

The ambassador expressed his country's support for Yemen's unity and its legitimate and democratic government. For his part, the brother member of the Presidential Council thanked the government of Eritrea for its support for unity, legitimacy, and democracy.

The brother member of the Presidential Council also received today (Somo Tiama), the Japanese ambassador in Sanaa, who expressed the Japanese Government's concern about what is happening in Yemen. He said his country supports unity, democracy, and legitimacy, hoping that calm will soon return to the Yemeni Republic.

The Presidential Council member thanked the Japanese Government for its support of unity and democracy and constitutional legitimacy.

Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani today also met with Arthur Hughes, the ambassador of the United States in Sanaa. They discussed the cultural background of nations and the need for dialogue between the peoples of the world that creates understanding and introduces people to each other.

The brother member of the Presidential Council spoke about the crisis, its stages, and the domestic and foreign efforts made to resolve it to safeguard peace and stability. He noted, however, that the rebel elements in the Socialist Party led the country to war and rejected all the concessions made to preserve unity and democracy. These elements insisted on departing from legitimacy and democracy and worked for secession and ignited war everywhere.

The U.S. ambassador expressed his country's support for Yemen's unity and legitimate, democratic government. He expressed hope that the crisis will come to an end and security and stability will prevail. He also noted the importance of dialogue between different cultures and civilizations.

New Arab League Envoy Takes Constitutional Oath

JN1905130094 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Brother Ahmad Muhammad Luqman took the Constitutional oath today before Presidential Council Chairman Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih on his appointment as ambassador and a permanent representative of our country to the Arab League.

Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwah attended the oath-taking ceremony.

Al-Bid Speaks With Other Arab Leaders on Situation

EA1905194194 Aden Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, chairman of the Presidential Council and secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party, yesterday evening held telephone conversations with his brother, His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal, king of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; His Excellency Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of Egypt; His Excellency Hafiz al-Asad, president of the Syrian Arab Republic; the custodian of the two holy places, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, king of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; and His Majesty Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al-Nahayyan, president of the UAE.

During the telephone conversations, Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid briefed his brothers, the kings and Arab heads of state on the latest developments affecting the Yemeni

arena, as well as developments in the fighting and the war, which was imposed on our people in the southern and eastern governorates by 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and the al-Ahmar family. He also exchanged greetings with them on the occasion of the blessed 'Id al-Adha, saying he hoped they and their fraternal peoples would achieve further progress and prosperity.

South's Oil Supplies Reportedly Normal

EA2005080094 Aden Yemeni Republic Radio Network in English 1600 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] 'Umar Ahmad Salih, the director general of the Yemeni Oil Company, Aden branch, said that the supply of oil and its by-products is normal in all stations and [word indistinct] in Aden Governorate. He said in a statement to SABA' news agency that the company had secured butane gas for consumers during the next 'Id al-Kebir days, except the first day.

UAE Blames Salih for Rejecting Cease-Fire Attempts

PM1905143094 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 May 94 pp1, 4

[Reports by 'Abdallah Hammudah and Lutfi Shatarah in London, Naji al-Harazi and Hammud Munsir in Sanaa, 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sadiqi in Abu-Dhabi, Muhammad Sadiq in Washington, and AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureaus in Aden and Cairo: "Shaykh Zayid Holds Salih Responsible for the Continuation of the War"]

[Excerpt] As the fierce fighting intensifies between the northern and southern forces on the al-'Anad-Kirsh and al-Dali'-al-Rahidah fronts, it seems that the military operations launched by Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih from Sanaa have reached red lines which cannot be crossed and that the situation now makes it necessary for the Arab and international powers to take a clear stand. Signs of such a stand have come from the United Arab Emirates [UAE] in holding President Salih responsible for the continuation of the war. A number of Yemeni leaderships have meanwhile considered a number of options including secession.

UAE diplomatic sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that UAE President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan frankly stated the UAE's position to the Yemeni president in a telephone conversation with him the day before yesterday, and said that he "regrets the Yemeni president's failure to respond to repeated appeals for a cease-fire."

The sources added that the UAE frankly stated its position because "it has no common borders with Yemen and no direct interest, and, therefore, being frank on the Yemeni conflict does not place any political or diplomatic burdens on it and would not leave room for anyone to doubt the UAE's goodwill and objectivity."

The sources hope that the UAE position will be an incentive for a number of other Arab states who are reluctant to declare "a frank position on the crisis to follow the example of the UAE as a way of putting pressure on Sanaa to agree to a cease-fire." They also said that although the UAE was the first Gulf state to sound the alarm, Shaykh Zayid "is still willing to make every sincere and true effort to contain the situation, prevent deterioration, and settle the dispute through dialogue in favor of the Yemeni people's interests and stability."

Shaykh Zayid emphasized that "dialogue is the only way to settle the Yemeni crisis. Yemen's interests must come before all other considerations."

Observers saw indications of the UAE position in the noticeable attention given to the visit of Salih Abu-Bakr Bin-Husaynun, the Yemeni oil and mineral resources minister who went there as an envoy of 'Ali Salim al-Bid, the vice president and secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP], compared with the cool official reception accorded to Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwah who went there as an envoy of President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the announcement of the Higher Salvation Council in Aden the day before yesterday came after comprehensive discussions by the leaders of the YSP and five other Yemeni opposition parties with the participation of 30 House of Representatives members from the southern and eastern governorates. The discussions covered five main points relating to the current options in the Yemen arena, as follows:

1. Appeal to the Arab kings and presidents, the United Nations, and the world's parliaments to intervene to stop the fighting, spare Yemeni blood, and prevent fragmentation of the Yemeni homeland.

2. Announce partition and restoration of south Yemen's independent international identity.

3. Ask a committee of deputies to visit some Arab and foreign capitals and UN centers to inform the world of the deputies' support for the YSP leadership.

4. Draw attention to the dangers of the emergence of a regime that supports forces which violate Arab consensus and forces of extremism.

5. Reaffirm the importance of the southern patriotic forces' determination to resist the northern invasion of the southern governorates.

The YSP leadership in Aden, however, has disclosed that it is currently studying a number of political options, especially mobilizing national support in the north and the south for the preservation of the unity state, and international support against the "alleged legitimacy which is in fact seeking to destroy that unity state and destroy all chances of a better future for the Yemeni people."

A responsible source at the U.S. State Department has confirmed that the United States "supports the efforts of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] and the Arab League to stop the fighting and settle the Yemeni crisis." [passage omitted]

Modern Arms, Funds Reportedly Flow Into Yemen

NC1905135194 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 13 May 94 p 1

[Report by Mahmud Bakri]

[Text] According to reports, in the ongoing battles in Yemen the two warring factions are using modern types of weapons that were not previously in the Yemeni arsenal. Our information confirms that the value of the weapons that have entered Yemen recently totals $1 billion and that these weapons have flowed into Yemen from various U.S., European, and Israeli arms companies. The reports say that Israel exploited the complications of the Yemeni crisis and shipped these weapons to Yemen via several African countires, including Uganda and Zaire.

Reports also say that there are secret alliances between certain Yemeni tribes and Israeli military personnel stationed in these African countries. The reports add that an Israeli military committee left for a tour of these countries early in February where they met with Yemeni tribal leaders. Under an agreement reached between the two parties, these Yemeni figures became responsible for shipping the arms to Yemen across Yemeni borders with certain Arab countries. The reports say that $2.1 billion has flowed into Yemen from abroad with the aim of consolidating the division.

The reports affirm that the Pledge and Accord Document which was signed in Amman on 20 February raised deep concern among foreign circles opposed to Yemeni unity. The Israeli Cabinet studied the Document on 28 February and realized that it augers well for Yemeni unity. They therefore considered that it posed a danger to Israeli security in the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa and that Yemeni unity might affect Israeli movements in the Red Sea littoral countries in Africa.

Kurdish Islamic Movement Reports Clashes With PUK

NC1905190494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] A spokesman for the Islamic Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan has announced that his movement carried out military operations yesterday, during which it regained Tappah Kurrah, (Muhammad Abad), (Kumalar), Anab, Bakrawah, Sirah, and Halabjah from the forces of the Patriot Union of Kurdistan [PUK], at the same time killing a number of PUK troops.

The spokesman added that the Islamic Movement is continuing its advance and is besieging the city of Sayyid Sadiq.

He added that during their occupation of the above-mentioned villages, Jalal Talabani's forces violated people's honor, carried out murders and massacres, and stole livestock.

The Islamic Movement spokesman said that the citizens of Shanaderi Khwaru fled to the plains and wadis to escape the PUK forces' assaults.

Further on Kurdish Clashes

NC1905200294 Paris AFP in English 1751 GMT 19 May 94

[By Tolle Aram]

[Text] Salah al-Din, Iraq, May 19 (AFP)—Heavy fighting has erupted between the two main Kurdish groups in northern Iraq ending a 10-day truce, Kurdish officials said Thursday.

Clashes, which broke out on Wednesday in the town of Kou Senjaq, some 50 kilometers (30 miles) east of the city of Irbil, in the east of Iraqi Kurdistan, were reported to be spreading to nearby areas on Thursday.

The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) led by Jalal Talabani and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of Mas'ud Barzani accused each other of starting the battle. No casualty toll has so far been issued.

Northern Iraq has been under PUK and KDP control since an uprising against Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's army at the end of the Gulf war in February 1991.

Officials from the Iraqi National Congress, a coalition said to represent all Kurdish and Arab groups opposed to Husayn, accused the PUK of breaching the May 8 ceasefire agreement in a statement to AFP.

The INC-brokered agreement ended two weeks of fighting in which at least 100 people were killed, and which caused the Kurdish region to split with the KDP controlling the western part and the PUK the eastern part.

Under the ceasefire accord INC militiamen could control check- points in the Irbil province lying between areas held by the KDP and the PUK.

"PUK troops came down the hill and took our checkpoint by force, and after that the KDP started to fight back," Ahmad Muhammad Nasiriyah, a Moslem Shiite from the southern Iraqi city of al-Nasiriyah, told AFP.

He said the clashes forced him and two fellow Moslem Shiites to flee the checkpoint and cross the fighting area on foot waving the INC flag.

The United Nations on Monday warned the PUK and KDP that further armed feuding might halt international aid to the Kurds.

The renewed battles came as the PUK accused Iranian militiamen of having fought against its forces in previous clashes, saying one Iranian fighter was captured.

PUK spokesman Muhammad Tawfiq said an undetermined number of Iranian Revolution Guards, or Pasdarans, had crossed the Iraq-Iran border and fought in the nearby Iraqi Kurdish villages of Halabjah and Qal'at Dizah.

The allegations were strongly denied by KDP spokesman Bruska Shaways.

Radio Urges Normalized Ties Between PUK, KDP

NC1905175794 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1630 GMT 19 May 94

[Station commentary]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The Kurdistan Parliament is a civilized accomplishment. It must remain a symbol of democracy and accord in Kurdistan. The two years since the election of this parliament have been rife with a series of malicious plots and intrigues concocted by the enemies of our Kurdish people. It succeeded in confronting all these problems through sincere and arduous efforts and appropriate decisions.

The current stage puts historic responsibilities on Parliament, responsibilities that require it to play an effective role in unifying the views of the two main parties in Kurdistan: The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] and the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] and to do all it can to normalize the situation.

Our final word is that the masses of Kurdistan elected the Parliament and trust in it. Anyone who believes in the masses and respects their aspirations will believe in the Parliament, respect its sanctity, have recourse to it, and consider working through it to be a civilized way of overcoming problems and warding off dangers.

Paper: Barzani Blocks Talabani's Entry Into Dahuk

JN1905103094 Baghdad INA in English 0830 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Baghdad, May 19, INA—AL-IRAQ daily said today that Mas'ud Barzani had refused a demand by his rival Jalal Talabani , who is currently in Syria, to secure his entry to Dahuk Province. It added that Barzani ordered his checking points in the region to prevent Talabani from entering the province.

The paper said that Barzani had sacked and arrested all Talabani aides in the administration in Zakho, Sarsank, al-'Imadiyah and Dahuk.

In another developments, AL-IRAQ quoted reports reached from al- Sulaymaniyah as saying that the elements of pro-Iranian Kurdish Islamic Movement are now gathering on the heights of al-Sulaymaniyah to support Barzani's elements in their efforts to oust their rivals from the province. The paper said that Talabani elements had confirmed that they had suffered heavy losses and were obliged to withdraw from Halabcha and Khormal and the surrounding areas.

Saddam Increases Price of Vegetable Oil, Tobacco

JN1405140594 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1030 GMT 14 May 94

[Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, has ordered an increase in the purchasing prices of vegetable oil and tobacco. Following is a list of crops, their current prices, and the increases his excellency, may God preserve him, has ordered:

1. Excellent-grade cotton: Current purchasing prices are D20,000 [dinars], and the new purchasing prices are D30,000. First-grade cotton: Current prices are D18,000, and the new purchasing prices are D27,000. Second-grade cotton: Current purchasing prices are D15,000, and the new purchasing prices are D22,000.

2. Sunflower: Current purchasing prices are D10,000, and the new purchasing prices are D17,000.

3. Soya beans: Current prices are D9,000, and the new purchasing prices are D16,000.

4. First-degree tobacco: Current prices are D25,000, and the new purchasing prices are D55,000. Second-degree: Current prices are D23,000, and the new prices are D50,000. Third-degree: Current prices are D19,000, and the new prices are D45. [no quantities as heard throughout]

Harvester Owners Told To Work 18 Hours Per Day

JN1705173394 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 10 May 94 p 4

[Report by Rawiyah Hashim]

[Excerpt] Baghdad—The Agriculture Ministry has instructed all harvester owners to work at least 18 hours a day.

Khaz'al al-Janabi, Agriculture Ministry under secretary and chairman of the Higher Committee of the Harvest Campaign, has said that the ministry has set rules fixing the dates for mechanical and manual harvesting. [passage omitted]

Harvest Guidelines Emphasize Meeting Deadlines

JN1905204194 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 12 May 94 p 4

[Article by Yasir Mutawalli: "Meeting Harvest Operations Deadlines Is Basis for Assessing Performance of Campaign Workers"]

[Text] The Ministry of Agriculture has announced new guidelines which the Higher Committee has approved for the wheat and barley harvest campaign this season to guarantee the fulfillment of the tasks of this national campaign at the fixed deadlines.

Announcing this to AL-THAWRAH, a source in the Ministry explained that the new guidelines oblige owners of harvesters to operate 18 hours daily. The guidelines also call on the central committees in the governorates to ensure the appropriate number of harvester drivers in order to maintain the continuity of work during the set daily hours, and to also provide the necessary repair and maintenance work.

The source explained that daily payments for campaign workers will stop on the set deadline and that any further delay in the harvest will be without pay. The performance of campaign workers will be assessed on the basis of meeting the deadlines.

The guidelines also oblige those concerned to ensure the necessary means for transporting crops, such as vehicles, and to avoid using harvesters for loading purposes since this will waste time and affect the efficiency of the harvester.

Paper Reports on Wheat, Barley Harvest in al-Ta'mim

JN1905204594 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 12 May 94 p 4

[Report by Muhammad Husayn: "Beginning of Harvest Campaign in al-Ta'mim Governorate"]

[Text] A major campaign for harvesting wheat and barley has begun in al-Ta'mim Governorate with the participation of more than 350 harvesters.

Al-Ta'mim Governor Hisham Sabah al-Fakhri said: A Central Harvest and Marketing Committee has been formed alongwith nine subcommittees in the Districts of

Huwayjah and Daquq and the Sub- Districts of Dibis, Altun, Kupri, Rashad, al-Riyad, and Tazah, and the village of Zab.

The governor added: In order to bolster the harvest and marketing campaign and to facilitate procedures for receiving grains from peasants and farmers, a new marketing center for receiving grain in bulk and bags has been set up in Huwayjah District, in addition to increasing the absorption capacity of Tazah receiving center and adding scales to Zab marketing center.

Minister on Arrival of Tractors, 236 Harvesters

JN1905203394 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 13 May 94 p 4

[Text] Industry and Minerals Minister Staff Gen Husayn Kamil Hasan has announced the arrival on 11 May 1994 of a ship carrying 236 harvesters and a number of agricultural tractors.

In a statement to the Iraqi News Agency, the minister said a special committee will distribute the harvesters and tractors to farmers in all governorates so that they can be immediately used in the current cultivation and harvest campaign.

The minister added; The Ministry of Industry and Minerals and the industrial sector are foremost supporters of the agricultural sector by supplying it with equipment and other essentials such as fetilizers and pesticides in order to develop agriculture and increase and improve the quality of production. This came in implementation of the directives of leader President Saddam Husayn, may God prserve and protect him, who is always concerned about developing the agricultural sector and enhancing its resources and capabilities in order to ensure food for our brave Iraqi people and to defeat the unjust blockade on our struggler country. May God grant us success in serving our people under the builder of Iraq's glory leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve and protect him.

It is noteworthy that a consignment of harvesters and tractors had arrived earlier this year and was distributed to farmers. Other consignments of agricultural harvesters and tractors will arrive forthwith.

Paper: Mubarak Splits Arab Ranks, Seeks West's Favor

JN1505145094 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0620 GMT 15 May 94

[Text] Baghdad, 15 May (INA)—The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH has wondered: If the entry of the Yemeni forces into Aden is viewed as occupation, how will we view the bringing of U.S. forces to Arab land to strike at the pulsating heart of Arabism?

In an article today, the newspaper says: We are with Yemen's unity. We reject secession, which means separation of part of the nation, which badly needs that part in the current atmosphere of conspiracy, defeatism, and subservience to foreigners.

The newspaper criticizes statements by Husni Mubarak, president of the Egyptian regime, who is fishing in murky water and trying to escalate Arab crises and undermine Yemeni unity by spreading despairing ideas, feeding differences, and widening the gap among the Arabs.

AL-JUMHURIYAH points out that one of the aims of the president of the Egyptian regime is to peddle the U.S.-Saudi plan to partition Yemen in order to win U.S. and Saudi goodwill.

He also tries to portray the situation in the Arab homeland as unstable and fragile in order to cover up his internal crisis and the growing national opposition against his regime, which is founded on precarious balance.

The newspaper explains that by this position, Husni Mubarak is taking revenge against Yemen for its national and pan-Arab stand during the immortal Mother of Battles, for its rejection of the foreign occupation of the Gulf region and the Arabian Peninsula, for its support for Iraq's principled position, and for its adherence to a solution within the Arab home. All this, the paper says, conflicts with Husni Mubarak's position.

Concluding, the newspaper says: These goals remind us of Husni Mubarak's attempts during the 30-state aggression against Iraq, when he hastened to hold an Arab summit conference in Cairo to abort the Arab solution and give legitimacy to bringing the invasion forces to the region to strike lofty Iraq and its people.

Columnist Blames Saudi Arabia for Yemeni War

JN1905181094 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 12 May 94 p 7

["Sidelines" column by Sabri Hammadi: "Who Did It Then?!"]

[Text] The Saudi regime's foreign minister has said the Arab Gulf states have been surprised by the military developments in Yemen, and he called on northern and southern Yemenis to end the fighting!!

We believe that some Gulf states may indeed have been surprised by the military developments in Yemen, but certainly not the Saudi regime. Because we are certain it is behind those developments. The Saudi regime has played a major role in plotting against Yemeni unity and fostering the secondary and marginal differences and disputes which have led to these military developments!

The Saudi regime, which has fought the Yemeni revolution since the first hours of its outbreak and cannot bear to see one unified, progressive, and developed Yemeni

Republic, cannot but conspire against Yemeni unity and encourage war and rebellion against legitimacy.

When one of the Yemeni unity sides turns to Riyadh and other Arab and western capitals, and goes to the Saudi capital in search of "guarantees" for unity, as he claimed at the time, when he was probably looking for assistance and support for what he planned and had in mind, it is only natural for the reactionary, hostile Saudi regime to exploit Arab unity in general, and Yemeni unity in particular, and to fully exploit its relationship with that side in order to make secession look attractive and to instigate that side to escalate the crisis and ignite the fire of war and sedition.

Sa'ud al-Faysal has lied twice: First, when he claimed that they were surprised by the military developments in Yemen, because it was his regime which created the atmosphere and paved the way for these developments; and second, when he called on northerners and southerners to end the fighting, because his regime is interested in the continuation of the war more than anyone else in order to exhaust and weaken the Yemeni Republic and waste its military and economic resources.

Peres on Talks, Future of 'New' Middle East

AU2005111594 Hamburg DIE WOCHE in German 19 May 94 p 22

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Lothar Menne; place and date not given: "End of Hunting Season"]

[Text] [Menne] Foreign Minister, when we met one year ago, you developed almost Messianic visions of a pacified "New Middle East," but you made no mention of the fact that you had been negotiating with the PLO in Oslo for months...

[Peres] ...and what would have become of the secret negotiations if I had told people like you about them under seal of strictest secrecy?

[Menne] Will you tell us instead what you currently have in the diplomatic pipeline?

[Peres] We are currently negotiating on another peace agreement with the Palestinians. Then we will test what can be achieved with the Syrians, but we have a dual problem there: Not only are the positions of the two parties opposed, but above all, we are not in direct negotiation. Everything goes via the United States.

[Menne] Do you still attach importance to an agreement with Syria?

[Peres] Yes, because there is no real solution for any country in the Middle East before we have achieved an economic and political agreement for the whole region.

[Menne] The United States continues to play an essential role in Middle East diplomacy. Can Russia, for its part, take on a role?

[Peres] Well, Russia's role is more a symbolic one today: The Russians have to ensure that the Middle East is on their agenda, but this will not mean for a long time yet that Russia is on the agenda of the Middle East. They simply want to maintain the image of the great Russia.

[Menne] Some questions about the personal side of the political development. What was the happiest day of your political life?

[Peres] The day on which the state of Israel was born.

[Menne] What did you feel when you heard about the massacre in Hebron?

[Peres] I was shaken to the marrow of my bones, I was ashamed and shocked.

[Menne] And do you fear for the peace process?

[Peres] No.

[Menne] What was your reaction when Yasir 'Arafat first refused to initial the maps of the Jericho territory during the signing of the autonomy agreement in Cairo?

[Peres] I fancied I was a doctor whose patient had just fallen and who had to find the right treatment very quickly.

[Menne] How did you feel when you saw the pictures of the Palestinian policemen marching into Jericho?

[Peres] These were very satisfying pictures for me. I did not feel any regret, on the contrary: I hope that the Palestinians will quickly develop a successful administration.

[Menne] You have worked for Israel all your life. Does it hurt that some of your compatriots are now calling you a traitor?

[Peres] No, I can live with it. I have only pity for these people.

[Menne] As defense minister, you dealt primarily with military tasks. You are regarded as the "father" of the Israeli nuclear reactor in Dimona. Now you are working on a peace solution. Has reality changed or have you changed?

[Peres] The basic conditions have changed. During the first 45 years, Israel's security was the main problem. Now it holds true that we only find security if we have peace. The "lever of deterrence" of Dimona directly influenced the peace agreement with Israel. I am still working for the same objectives, only the means have changed. In former times, the country needed above all weapons, today it needs wisdom. If one wants to achieve peace, wars have to be made impossible.

[Menne] What can still endanger the peace process now?

[Peres] Actually, only something idiotic or unpredictable. I believe that the current of history is leading the people away from war. Seen from the historical point of view, we have come to the end of the hunting season—what is important cannot be hunted any longer and what can still be hunted is no longer important.

[Menne] That is to say, you think that the peace process is irreversible?

[Peres] Certainly. The process was not initiated under pressure from other countries or by threats of war, but by a national process of will, like almost all great achievements of the past decade. A communist caused the end of communism, a white South African the end of apartheid, a Peronist the end of Peronism. And Israel initiated the termination of the Middle East conflict.

[Menne] What will happen next?

[Peres] The next step is the development of the New Middle East. In concrete terms, this means for the Israelis and Palestinians that the two national footbridges grow together into a bridge in the next five years. After the election in the autumn, we will negotiate on the extension of the autonomy settlement.

[Menne] What will become of the Jewish settlers in the occupied territories?

[Peres] Everything will depend on the relations between Palestinians and Israelis. If 500 Jewish settlers live among 190,000 Arabs in Hebron, this will be no problem if the relations are good. However, if they are bad, the situation will be unbearable.

[Menne] That is to say, the psychological barriers between Israelis and Palestinians first have to be reduced?

[Peres] Exactly. As it was also possible between Germans and French, Germans and Poles. We must not forget that on both sides the third or fourth generation has already grown up now with completely consolidated hostile images; everyone imputes the most devilish intentions to the other from the start. It will take some time until both sides understand that they are a community of fate.

[Menne] Is it not the prerequisite for such a peace process that the Palestinians get their own state?

[Peres] There is, of course, a completely legitimate national consciousness, which also needs a political form of expression. And the autonomy settlement grants them everything that makes up a state, except for defense and foreign politics. However, there will be all symbols of independence, from passports to stamps. Over the long term, I prefer the model of a confederation—politically between Jordanians and Palestinians, economically between Israelis, Jordanians, and Palestinians, which can be approximately compared to the Benelux structure. In the near future, however, we still have to be very careful with Israel's security interests.

[Menne] How is the New Middle East supposed to look in concrete terms?

[Peres] Like the European Community. Borders would only be defined in demographic and cultural terms, but they would not be permitted to impede the movements of people, ideas, and goods. What television can do must also be possible for streets, railroads, and aircraft. The most important objective must be the general raising of the standard of living because if someone has a low income and a television set, he will compare his situation with that of a European and feel envy, bitterness, and rage; in this way, fundamentalist movements are created.

[Menne] Will the economy play a greater role than politics in the creation of the New Middle East?

[Peres] We should introduce economics in politics, instead of politicizing economies. Many Arabs still see their economy in an old-fashioned way as a national economy, which, however, no longer exists because markets are more important than nations and because one cannot place flags on one's children's breakfast table. "Cannons instead of socks, tanks instead of shoes," it was said in Israel in the fifties, today I hear more and more frequently: "Better a bank than a tank." We have to create a regional community with a common market.

[Menne] And who is supposed to pay for it?

[Peres] For one thing, this does not cost a penny, we would only have to restrict some crazy expenses. In the last decade, the Middle East spent billions of dollars on arms, the Syrian armament budget devours almost half of the GDP, in Israel it is only 26 percent. These are enormous sums, of which a reasonable part might flow into economic development. Only very rich countries can afford expensive armies and costly dictatorships.

[Menne] What can Israel offer to its neighbors?

[Peres] Above all technology and science. Only think of the rapid spreading of the desert in the Middle East—we have very precise experiences with techniques that can check and force back this desertification of the region. Our neighbors can immediately benefit from it.

[Menne] And what can the Arab countries offer to Israel?

[Peres] We can economically survive without our neighbors; our exports are well developed. But politically it is very problematic for Israel to exist as an island of affluence in a sea of poverty. Therefore, the Arabs can give the most important thing to us: peace.

Peres Announces Talks With PLO on Five 'Key' Areas

NC1905210494 Paris AFP in English 1954 GMT 19 May 94

[Excerpts] Paris, May 19 (AFP)—Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres announced here Thursday [19 May] that talks would soon be held on transferring power in five key areas to Palestinian authorities throughout the West Bank.

Speaking after a meeting with President Francois Mitterrand, Peres said he believed that, in the near future, Israeli and Palestinian leaders would discuss "the transfer of power in certain sectors into the hands of Palestinian authorities on the West Bank."

Peres, who arrived in the French capital Thursday for a 24-hour visit after talks in Oslo with Palestine Liberation Organisation leader Yasir 'Arafat, cited health, education, tourism, and fiscal and social matters as the sectors in question.

The Israeli army, which finished its withdrawal overnight Tuesday from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho, still occupies some West Bank regions.

The first part of bilateral negotiations had been concluded successfully, Peres said.

The Israelis "have left Gaza and Jericho and this is the first time that the Palestinian people have made real, territorial gains," he added.

Questioned on 'Arafat's recent call for a Moslem holy war—or jihad—to liberate Jerusalem, Peres said that he hoped the comment did not presage a return to PLO militancy.

"The past cannot be changed but I hope that it will not be repeated in the future," Peres said.

" 'Arafat made a mistake that he has tried to correct, but despite this the negotiations must continue." [passage omitted]

Peres and 'Arafat announced earlier Thursday after meeting in Oslo that they had agreed on an agenda for the next round of talks on the West Bank territories.

Those talks would probably take place in Cairo, Peres said, adding that further negotiations about the extension of Palestinian autonomy would be held in Washington at a date to be arranged.

Beilin Seeks U.S. Involvement on Syrian Track

TA1905193694 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1530 GMT 19 May 94

[Interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin by Shlomo Ganor and Yoni Ben-Menahem in the studio on 19 May—recorded, in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles; processed from the Hebrew]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Ganor] What about a Syrian early warning station in the Galilee? Could such a thing be acceptable to Israel?

[Beilin] Look, I cannot get into detail. Someone has taken something out of context or made something up. There will be many such reports. I think that what is important is that U.S. shuttle diplomacy is working and I very much hope that it will continue at an accelerated pace. If it does not continue I see no possibility of reaching an agreement because the Syrians refuse to hold Oslo or Camp David style talks with us. If things continue at the present pace, then I believe agreement is possible and then all these details will be explained in the course of negotiations.

[Ben-Menahem] But there are five Syrian conditions. What is Israel's reaction to these conditions?

[Beilin] Look, I do not want to discuss the actual negotiations. Although everything is very public, it is very important to keep the details secret because negotiations become impossible once everything becomes public. The five conditions published in AL-HAYAH apparently are not really Syria's conditions, and I would not like to juxtapose Israel's stands against some newspaper leak—whether accurate or not—of the Syrian position.

[Ben-Menahem] Why hold these shuttle trips? Why not establish a secret negotiating track as we did in Oslo?

[Beilin] Because the Syrians refuse to do so. That is the only reason. I think that if one wants to hold serious negotiations it is very important to keep things secret. Then you do not have media or psychological pressures on either side. Nor must one point to a breakthrough in every single round of talks. To my great regret, the Syrians refuse to make such a move. If I had to choose between not holding negotiations at all or having these shuttle missions by U.S. officials in parallel with the bilateral negotiations in Washington, then I think we have to accept the continuation of U.S. diplomacy.

[Ganor] You keep stressing the U.S. role, especially that of the secretary of state in these shuttle missions. What should Warren Christopher do now in order to put the Syrian-Israeli negotiations on a more practical track?

[Beilin] This decision is a matter of great importance. Out of more than 70 international conflicts, this is one with a better chance for resolution. He should be here more often, he should travel between Damascus and Jerusalem. If this is done, I am sure that we shall reach a solution because, in my opinion, the major problems have already been resolved now that the Syrians have finally expressed their readiness to talk about peace with Israel and Israel is finally prepared after quite a few years to speak of withdrawal with regard to the Golan Heights.

[Ganor] Do you expect the secretary of state to visit the region more frequently?

[Beilin] I would very much hope that these visits not always come at the tail end of other visits. In other words, as some kind of way to cap other visits to Europe or Turkey. I think it is important that the Americans consider this a central foreign policy issue. Something they can start work on and resolve.

[Ben-Menahem] There were reports this week that Christopher applied some sort of pressure on Syrian President al-Asad. Do you really think the Americans can pressure Syria in a way that can accelerate the process?

[Beilin] Look, the question is how you define pressure. According to the reports and I have received no confirmation of them—he simply told the Syrians that if they could not answer his questions he would wash his hands of the matter. The only U.S. pressure I can discern here is a lack of involvement in the process. They did not threaten to stop helping some party or to harm someone else. I do not particularly believe in this theory of U.S. pressure. In Oslo, we proved that we could reach a very interesting and far-reaching agreement without any U.S. involvement, and I also think there is no need for any U.S. pressure either on Syria or on Israel. I think that what is needed is for the United States to devote time to this issue, because without the Americans there will be no peace with Syria. [passage omitted]

[Ben-Menahem] Mr. Beilin, you have voiced great expectations from Christopher's shuttle missions. Do you still believe that peace with Syria is attainable in 1994?

[Beilin] It all depends on the rate of progress. If things are accelerated, many rounds of talks will be held, and we will be able to exchange views with the Syrians. Then I think that peace will be achievable in 1994. If, on the other hand, the meetings and visits by U.S. officials come every two months then we can simply forget about it.

[Ganor] What must first happen in order to realize your more optimistic assessment?

[Beilin] What I am saying is quite simple and based on my own personal experience from the talks with the Jordanians and Palestinians six, seven, and eight years ago. When the negotiations were not direct but rather conducted through the Americans we were totally dependent on their tempo. When the Americans could afford to devote a lot of time to the politics of the region, things made very rapid progress. If you recall, there were the 10 points with Jordan in 1986 and other things that the Americans—at the time Richard Murphy was especially involved in the political process—pushed very quickly. Whenever they were forced to devote their attention to other matters, the peace process ground to a halt. I must admit that there is an unpleasant dependency on the United States. We must fight for an important place on the U.S. agenda. The more time Washington devotes to the Middle East, the greater the chances of peace.

[Ganor] Nevertheless, Mr. Beilin, if Jerusalem declares that it is prepared to withdraw from the Golan Heights, then progress can be made, at least from the Syrian point of view.

[Beilin] First of all, I am not sure. I do not know. Do you believe we will rapidly establish peace if we make such a declaration tomorrow? I would not bet on it. So far, I have found some elements of Syria's policy quite baffling. The fact is that up to this very moment, Syria has not fully detailed its concept of the nature of peace and whether it includes diplomatic and economic relations, open borders, and so forth. I, however, do not believe we shall issue such a declaration. Our declaration that the depth of withdrawal on the Golan Heights will correspond to the depth of peace with Syria is the most far-reaching and comprehensive statement that Israel can make before launching negotiations. I am not proposing that Syria and Israel accept the other party's position before the negotiations start.

[Ganor] But you are not ruling out the possibility that Jerusalem may declare its readiness to relinquish the Golan Heights in the course of the negotiations?

[Beilin] I hope this will not be the case. I hope we can reach an arrangement with Syria while giving up as little as possible of the Golan Heights. At any rate, whatever agreement is eventually reached will have to be brought before the people in a national referendum and the people will decide whether they are willing to pay the price for peace with Syria, which by definition will not be an easy one, or actually to pay the price for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East because currently the Syrians are the most problematic element in the Arab world vis a vis Israel. An agreement with them means diplomatic relations with Lebanon, Jordan, the Gulf states and most of the Maghreb countries. [passage omitted]

Beilin: Djerejian Resignation 'Regrettable'

TA2005055194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 20 May 94

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin by Hayim Zissowitz; place not given—live]

[Text] [Zissowitz] I understand you were surprised by Ambassador Djerejian's resignation.

[Beilin] I admit I was very surprised, and up to this moment I have not been officially informed about it. I understand from the media that it is final, and if that is so, then it is very problematic and very regrettable from our viewpoint due to his short tenure and Djerejian's importance in the political process.

[Zissowitz] Did you not detect a short circuit between Djerejian and his State Department bosses in Washington?

[Beilin] I do not think there was anything like that, anyway I did not know about anything like that. According to the report from Washington, it was not due to any internal problem, but because he has received an outside offer he could not turn down.

[Zissowitz] Djerejian was meant to have a central role in the talks with the Syrians, and will be missed, if only due to the fact that he was ambassador in Damascus and knew al-Asad.

[Beilin] That is true. He made a very important contribution. We had a very interesting situation in which our ambassador, Itamar Rabinovich, also heads the talks with Syria and is an expert on Syria. The U.S. ambassador in Israel was previously ambassador in Syria, and then assistant secretary for Near Eastern affairs. The fact that the two played a role in the political process was very, very important for the shuttle diplomacy commenced by the secretary of state. That is why we so much regret his apparent decision to resign.

[Zissowitz] Could it impair, spoil the negotiations with the Syrians?

[Beilin] No, it cannot hamper the negotiations, but he made a contribution, which will cease with his departure. It cannot harm or deeply hinder the political process, which at the moment depends to a certain extent on U.S. readiness to enhance its efforts in the shuttle between the two sides in view of the existing gaps and the positive basis existing between them.

[Zissowitz] How would you define the situation in the talks with the Syrians?

[Beilin] I would say that the shared principle of peace and territories is very firm, as never before, and it gives me hope that we will have a peace accord within months and not years. The separate positions appear to be very far apart, therefore there is an optically distorted picture of gaps that cannot be bridged. I believe the gaps can be bridged, and I think it is the U.S. Administration that can bridge those gaps, because at the moment, I do not see a better channel for talks between us and them, especially since the Syrians are still unprepared for talks between the two sides on a senior political level. Therefore, in addition to the resumption of the bilateral talks in Washington, U.S. shuttle diplomacy will have a role in closing the gaps. That is why I am optimistic, and anything that harms the chance to succeed in that diplomacy, such as Djerejian's announcement, is regrettable.

[Zissowitz] Djerejian served as ambassador here only a short time. Would you call him a friend of Israel?

[Beilin] I do not know if we can use that expression....

[Zissowitz, interrupting] We usually like to stick those titles on people.

[Beilin] I have my own formula. I say that whoever is a friend of peace is a friend of Israel, and Djerejian definitely was a friend of peace. I also think that he can be seen as a personal friend of many among us. The man was very informed. I met him almost 10 years ago when he began his post as head of the Israel desk in the State Department, and then in other posts, including ambassador in Syria, and assistant secretary for Near Eastern affairs, and in all those roles he made an important contribution to the political process. In his previous position, he headed their team in the multilateral talks, and together we advanced those talks beyond their poor start and made them into something much more significant. He is one of the most knowledgeable people on the Middle East in the State Department, and there are not many others like him. That is why his move is a blow to us. In order to find somebody to replace Djerejian as ambassador in Israel they will have to search far and wide in the State Department for somebody with his level of expertise, knowledge, and familiarity.

[Zissowitz] Will Israel ask that the appointment be made as soon as possible?

[Beilin] I assume that is a top American interest. We will not intervene in the selection of the person or the timing, but it is obvious that in the very intensive relations between us and the Americans, neither of us can permit long interruptions.

Two IDF Soldiers Shot Dead by 'Terrorists'

Hamas, Islamic Jihad Claim Attack

TA2005090694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0845 GMT 20 May 94

[Text] Two soldiers were killed this morning south of the Erez junction when shot by terrorists from a vehicle which left the Gaza Strip and returned there following the shooting. The fatalities were reservists. One soldier was named as Moshe Bukhra of Netanya, while the name of the other fatality has not yet been released.

The soldiers were deployed with a third soldier at a temporary roadblock south of the Erez junction when a Peugeot car suddenly appeared from the south and opened fire at them. The two soldiers died on the spot while the third managed to return fire at the assailants. The vehicle returned to the Gaza Strip. No chase was given because there were no additional IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers there.

The representative of the Palestinian police force in the Gaza Strip told AP by telephone that the Palestinian police force did not open fire, and said that from the point of view of the Palestinian authorities in the Gaza Strip the incident is over.

Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad claim responsibility for the attack. Hamas said in announcements made in Gaza mosques that the assailants belonged to 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam. A different announcement made to the foreign press in the Gaza Strip said they belonged to the Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip.

Beilin Criticizes Palestinian Reaction

TA2005105494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 20 May 94

[Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin says Israel cannot countenance a situation in which terrorists escape into the autonomous areas after an attack and the Palestinian authorities do not take steps to apprehend them. In an interview with reporter Jack Katzenell, Beilin said the Palestinian administration is still in diapers, but it must disarm the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terrorists. Today's terrorists' attacks were both sad and serious, Beilin said.

[Begin Beilin recording] It is sad because of the people who were killed and injured, and it is serious also because of the fact that the Palestinians did not react properly to this event. What they have to do is to claim responsibility to assure that they are doing their utmost in order to disarm those people, and to pursue them, and to find them. The difficulties are there, we know that, we don't dismiss it, but it is now the duty of the Palestinian police to deal with the matter, to find the people, and to do whatever possible in order to prevent a recurrence of those events in the future. [end recording]

Opposition Reacts Sharply to Incidents

TA2005105794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 20 May 94

[Excerpt] The opposition has reacted sharply to the attacks in the Gaza Strip. The National Religious Party has called on the public to rise up and prevent what it terms the government head-long dive into the abyss. The head of Tzomet, Refa'el Eytan, says the attacks are the inevitable outcome of a government that ordered the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] to flee Gaza, in his words, in the middle of the night.

The YI'UD [Independent and Democratic Israel] party is demanding that the prime minister halt the passage of all vehicles from Gaza into Israeli territory. A short time ago, reporter Harley Braidman got this reaction from the senior Likud member of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee Eliyahu Ben-Elisar:

[Begin Ben-Elisar recording] This is a tragedy because again everybody can see what a catastrophe was bestowed upon us by a government which is blind and weak, and is pursuing a policy which could not succeed, could have no chance of succeeding because it is against nature, and against human character and mentality. How can a foreign and powerful nation like Israel try to strike a peace agreement with a snake, with 'Arafat, with the PLO, and believe that this is the only way out of the difficulties, and trust such a man, who is not being trusted by his Arab colleagues? Believe me, I know what I am saying. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Gur Notes 'Doubts' About PLO Accord Execution

TA1805123994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 18 May 94

[Text] Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur says that there are doubts about the implementation of autonomy. There have been shooting incidents with casualties, and there is a feeling that the situation is unclear and that working patterns have as yet to be established. The deputy defense minister made these observations during a visit to the Qatif Bloc on the first day of the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment.

Our Army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that referring to 'Arafat's remarks in South Africa, Deputy Minister Gur said the PLO chief's conduct was beyond any political or human ethics, and was inexcusable. He did not believe, however, that the agreement was in any danger.

Tzvi Handel, head of the Hof 'Aza Regional Council, told the deputy minister that a car stolen yesterday from the Eley Sinai settlement was today found in the possession of a Palestinian policeman.

Likud, UTJ Submit No-Confidence Motions

TA1905195594 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] The coalition is recruiting all its members prior to the no-confidence motions that will be heard on Monday [23 May]. The United Torah Jewry [UTJ] has submitted a no-confidence motion over the desecration of the Sabbath and holidays during the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. The Likud submitted a motion of no confidence because because it alleges that the government is prepared to hold negotiations over the future of Jerusalem.

Sharon Calls For New Likud Leadership

TA1705134094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 17 May 94

[Text] Knesset Member [MK] Ari'el Sharon says that the Likud needs a new leadership, and that an alternative—of which he intends to be a member—must be created for the failed opposition.

Interviewed by Qol Yisra'el, Sharon said the struggle was being spearheaded by the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza rather than by the Likud, which has failed miserably. Sharon said the Likud should get a new leadership, capable of waging a democratic and legal struggle in the face of danger.

Reacting to Sharon's remarks, MK Me'ir Shitrit said that most Likud voters apparently want peace, and that is why so few of them take part in anti-peace demonstrations. He called on Sharon to appear before the Likud Central Committee and try to muster 75 percent required for the election of a new leadership. Shitrit said he will not lend a hand to the ouster of Binyamin Netanyahu, who would be called upon to quit the leadership only if he fails in the elections. MK Shitrit proposed to Netanyahu to consolidate a leadership of five or six people, including Ari'el Sharon, to make the Likud leadership's work more effective.

Boycott of 'Arafat, Elections in Territories Urged

TA1905151894 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 19 May 94 p 9

[Editorial: "Elections Now"]

[Text] It was a mistake to bet on Yasir 'Arafat from the very beginning. 'Arafat's almost 30 years of experience in control of Fatah and the PLO attest not only to his talent for survival but also to the guilefulness that renders him untrustworthy. He has not undergone the necessary and hoped-for metamorphosis from the leader of a national liberation movement, operating partially in exile and even clandestinely, to a statesman. He has failed to rise to the greatness of the hour and is returning not to the Gaza Strip and Jericho, but back to his old tricks.

'Arafat, however, is not the PLO or the Palestinian people. It was he who signed the Cairo agreement with Yitzhaq Rabin but the relations between the two peoples and their respective political entities cannot depend on the nature of changing leaders, who are mere mortals subject to political transitions. 'Arafat's inflammatory sermon in Johannesburg is a serious matter not because it addressed the question of Jerusalem—Israel is indeed obligated to discuss all the issues, including East Jerusalem and the settlements, in the negotiations over the permanent arrangement, even if the Palestinian yarn spinner made up a "letter from Rabin" for the benefit of his audience—but because the hallowed words of peace can no longer be voiced by a person who calls for jihad. If the sermon was some kind of tactical move designed to mobilize support for 'Arafat's policies then it is a mistake because there are also skeptics among the Israeli public and these kinds of tricks discourage them from supporting the political process. If it is an indication of 'Arafat's substantive position, along the lines of the "phased" doctrine, then it proves that 'Arafat is deluding himself that Israel is so weakened that its withdrawal will not stop at the Green Line. Whichever way, 'Arafat, personally, is no longer a credible partner for negotiations.

In the Declaration of Principles, Israel pledged to hold elections in the territories within three months of implementing the first stage of withdrawal in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. This stage has now been completed and the countdown for elections should begin. Contrary to his earlier eagerness to incorporate this clause into the agreement (in order to use it to include East Jerusalem), 'Arafat now seeks to rule the territories without elections. Israel shares this interest to the extent that it is a partner to 'Arafat's concern over the rise of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and similar organizations; however, Israel's partnership with 'Arafat does not involve supporting him against the PLO's middle generation, which is poised to fight for its inclusion in the territories' leadership.

Israel must insist on the implementation of the clause on elections in the territories following sufficient preparations that should last not three but six months. Israel should make the continuation of the process conditional on the holding of elections with the participation of all parties whose declared goal is to make peace with Israel, without the threat of any jihads. In other words, not Hamas, not the Islamic Jihad, not the rejectionist fronts, and perhaps not even 'Arafat. Israel must negotiate with the authorized representatives of the Palestinian people but not with those who stick the agreement in their pocket and then threaten a ruthless war to achieve the rest of their objectives, a war over everything.

Rabin Seen 'Best Qualified' Leader in 2 Polls

TA2005111694 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 20 May 94 p 1

[YEDI'OT AHARONOT poll conducted by the Dahaf Institute under the management of Dr. Mina Tzemah; all findings in percentages]

[Text] Question: Which of the following leaders is in your opinion best qualified to lead the country at the present time?

Yitzhaq Rabin	36
Binyamin Netanyahu	19
Ari'el Sharon	12
Refa'el Eytan	11
Hayim Ramon	9
Shim'on Peres	7
No reply	6

Question: Which of the following two leaders is in your opinion best qualified to lead the country at the present time?

Yitzhaq Rabin	50
Binyamin Netanyahu	38
No reply	12

The poll was conducted on 17 and 18 May among 503 interviewees.

Al-Asad, King Husayn Begin Damascus Talks

JN2005112394 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 20 May 94

[Text] With God's care and protection, His Majesty King Husayn today arrived in Damascus on a brief visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad led those who received his majesty at Damascus International Airport. Also receiving the king were Vice Presidents 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Zuhayr Mashariqah, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, the deputy prime ministers, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar, ministers, and several senior Syrian officials, as well as Ahmad al-'Adayilah, Jordan's ambassador in Damascus, and his embassy staff.

Arriving with the king were Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, the prime minister; al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court; and Marwan al-Qasim, his majesty the king's political adviser.

After shaking hands with those who were on hand to receive him, the king, accompanied by President Hafiz al-Asad, left for the People's Palace, where talks between the two parties started. The talks are cochaired by His Majesty King Husayn and President Hafiz al-Asad.

Al-Asad Sees 'Wide Differences' With Israel

PM1905112094 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 19 May 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Rafiq Khalil al-Ma'luf, Ibrahim Humaydi, and Salamah Ni'mat: "Damascus: Differences Still Wide; Christopher To Return at the End of the Month"]

[Excerpt] Washington, Damascus, Amman, Tunis, occupied Jerusalem, AL-HAYAH—The Syrian presidential palace stressed at the end of President Hafiz al-Asad's talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher yesterday that "differences are still wide" between Syria and Israel over the peace process.

Christopher departed Damascus for Cairo yesterday afternoon where he met with President Husni Mubarak and Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa. He briefed them on the results of his talks with Syrian and Israeli officials.

An Egyptian Foreign Ministry spokesman told AL-HAYAH that the talks focused primarily on the Syrian-Israeli track, which is receiving the United States' attention to stress that what it is seeking is indeed a comprehensive peace.

In Damascus, Christopher held a round of talks with President al-Asad.

In a statement to AL-HAYAH U.S. sources expected Secretary Christopher to return to the region at the end of the month to resume his role in conveying ideas between the two sides and bring their views on a peace solution closer, as Israel continues to give precedence to normalization questions, confidence-building measures, and security arrangements over the withdrawal question. While Syria stresses that the peace process begins when Israel is committed to full withdrawal from the Golan. Then it would discuss with Israel the question of equal security arrangements, relations, and other questions.

Al-Asad met with Christopher in the presence of Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the peace process. Presidential spokesman Jubran Kuriyah announced after the meeting, which lasted four hours, that al-Asad had been handed a message from President Bill Clinton, "stressing the U.S. keenness to continue its efforts to achieve a fundamental breakthrough in the peace process. While the Syrian president renewed his demand that Israel withdraw from the occupied Golan Heights to the 4 June [1967] lines."

Kuriyah pointed out that al-Asad "expressed his appreciation for U.S. efforts, stressing Syria's keenness to continue the peace process to achieve a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy and the land for peace principle."

He added that "Christopher briefed al-Asad on the results of his talks in Israel which demonstrated that the differences are still wide because the Israeli stand is far from the foundations and requirements of the peace process launched at the Madrid conference" in 1991. The presidential spokesman added that the Syrian president renewed his country's "position on and commitment to the foundations of the peace process based on the Security Council resolutions, which commit Israel to full withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 lines in order to achieve a just and comprehensive solution in the region." Syrian sources have said that when Christopher comes to Damascus carrying "Israel's agreement to full withdrawal to the 4 June borders, he will have brought a key for the launch of a process" toward achieving progress in the peace negotiations. While al-Asad stressed the existence of "wide differences" between Syria and Israel, Israeli radio yesterday spoke about Syria's "flexibility" in its peace stands. [passage omitted]

Al-Shar': Israel Has No Intention To Fully Withdraw

JN1905140394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received at 1100 today Mahmud Bakr Rasul, director general of the Arab Labor Organization [ALO].

Discussion dealt with the Arab situation and the ALO activities.

Khaddam also received at 1300 (Jacob Kleinberger), Swiss secretary of state for foreign affairs. The meeting was attended by Swiss ambassador in Damascus Kurt

Wyss. Talks dealt with the situation in the region, the international situation, and latest developments in the peace process.

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received (Kleinberger) this morning. The meeting was attended by Yusuf Shakkur, assistant to the foreign minister; Muwaffaq Nassar, director of the Western Europe Desk; (Martin Schbkhar), director of the Middle East Department at the Swiss Foreign Ministry; and the Swiss ambassador in Damascus.

Talks centered on the latest developments in the peace process in light of the results of the Geneva summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton, and the latest tours of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in the region.

The foreign minister said the Israeli proposals conveyed by Secretary Christopher during his latest visit did not help achieve progress because they were based on premeditated Israeli intentions not to fully withdraw from the territories that were occupied in 1967.

(Kleinberger) expressed the Swiss Government's position in support of the peace process on the basis of implementing Security Council resolutions and the principle of land for peace.

The Swiss secretary of state for foreign affairs arrived in Damascus yesterday afternoon.

'Sources' Cited on U.S. Brokering With Israel

PM1705101994 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 17 May 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Raghidah Dirgham and Ibrahim Humaydi: "Israel Proposes Comprehensive Deal 'Assuming' Full Withdrawal in Five Years"]

[Excerpts] New York, Damascus, occupied Jerusalem—U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher yesterday evening conveyed to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres the outcome of his talks in Damascus with President Hafiz al-Asad and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' on peace between the two sides and ways of reactivating direct bilateral negotiations.

While Syrian sources spoke of the negotiations' entering "a new and fundamental phase dealing with minute details," well-informed sources in New York told AL-HAYAH that Christopher had carried to the Syrian leadership a new Israeli offer which represents "an integrated deal" that covers all the elements concerning the Syrian-Israeli relationship, beginning with security through to details of a specific timetable for withdrawal from the Golan, as well as Hizballah's future in southern Lebanon.

The sources added that the new Israeli offer stipulates a phased withdrawal to be completed in five years, not eight years as mentioned in the first offer. The Israeli proposal "assumes" "full" withdrawal from the Golan, linking this with the other elements in the deal, first and foremost security, not only with regard to the Golan but in southern Lebanon as well, since disarming Hizballah represents one of the deal's elements.

U.S. and Israeli diplomatic sources expect "difficult and protracted negotiations" with the Syrians. They point out that, if the Syrians and the Israelis want to reach an agreement, this agreement should be reached within a year, that is before Israeli elections begin. [passage omitted]

In Damascus, well-informed sources expect Christopher to return to the Syrian capital to convey Israel's position on the Syrian plan and to resume his role in bringing views closer. They told AL-HAYAH that Damascus is still awaiting the "password" from the Israelis. "We are still awaiting the word 'full' withdrawal from the Golan. When they agree to it, all possibilities will open to discuss all the other questions that follow that." [passage omitted]

Syrian sources have said that the peace process has entered "a new and fundamental phase" with Christopher's conveying of the two sides' views of peace. They added that Christopher's decision to return to Damascus "means that there are extensive U.S. efforts aimed at steps to help the parties to move closer to one another and make progress on the long road toward peace." They went on to say that Damascus "welcomes the U.S. endeavors and hopes that the U.S. secretary's tour will result in a fundamental and constructive breakthrough, in order to advance the peace process and consolidate the constants of a peaceful solution." The sources reemphasized that "the condition needed to make Christopher's mission a success is Israel's response to full withdrawal from the Golan." [passage omitted]

Press on Need for Israel's 'Complete' Withdrawal

JN2005071894 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 20 May 94

[Press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Requirements For Peace," AL-THAWRAH says: From the outcome of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's talks in the region, it became apparent that the gap in viewpoints on peace and means to achieve it is very large because the Israeli position is very far from the foundations and requirements of the peace process launched in the Madrid conference.

The paper notes that the Israeli position on the peace process and its objectives is characterized by a disdain for the peace process, avoidance of its objective—comprehensive peace—and an attempt to replace it with the objective of partial solutions.

The paper adds: In contrast, the Syrian position on the peace process and its objective is characterized by concern for the peace process and full accord with the Madrid formula and the resolutions of international legitimacy. This position was reaffirmed by President Hafiz al-Asad when he received the U.S. secretary of state the day before yesterday.

AL-THAWRAH says: In light of the obvious contradiction between the Syrian and Israeli positions, one important fact emerges: The peace which Israel seeks to achieve is different from that which the world and the Arabs want for the region.

The paper stresses: The kind of peace the world agrees upon and for which the Arabs entered into talks in Madrid and Washington is the kind of peace based on justice and comprehensiveness and the kind of peace that returns to the Arabs their rights and occupied territories in full.

Concluding its editorial, AL-THAWRAH says: Because the Israeli position is still far from the foundations and requirements of the peace process, the U.S. sponsor must build a new direction for his efforts, based on providing all that is necessary to force Israel to accept the requirements of the peace process, on top of which is complete, unconditional withdrawal.

On the same subject, AL-THAWRAH says: The outcome of Christopher's talks in Israel has revealed the big gap between Israeli and Syrian positions on peace because Israel is very far from the foundations and requirements of the peace process, which started in the Madrid conference.

The paper adds: Syria has stressed, and still stresses, concern for the continuation of the peace process and a commitment to continue to make efforts to push this process forward. It has also responded, and still responds, positively to U.S. efforts in that regard. Syria, at the same time, adheres to the resolutions of legitimacy and the UN Security Council which obliges Israel to withdraw completely to the 4 June 1967 borders as the condition without which the just and comprehensive peace in the region cannot be attained.

Concluding its editorial, the paper stresses the need for Washington's assuming the role of the unbiased, fair, and effective partner by forcing Israel to submit to international legitimacy and its resolutions.

Under the headline "No Peace Without Land," AL-BA'TH says in its editorial today that the U.S. initiative, which is based on the land-for-peace formula, constituted the foundation on which the Madrid Middle East peace conference was based. Resolutions 242 and 338 were considered the legal instruments that make the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories null, rejected, and impermissible, the paper says.

The paper notes that all those interested in world peace have acknowledged the importance of Syria's positive role in the peace process since its acceptance to attend the Madrid conference. They considered that acceptance to be the most important in creating a new reality based on just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

AL-BA'TH says: When the rounds of Washington bilateral talks started, the Arabs felt that Israel was refusing to give specific pledges to implement international legitimacy and that its maneuvers constituted an extortion of the state sponsoring the talks. With the start of every round of talks, Israel wanted new weapons and fresh financial grants Every round was also preceded by a flagrant Israeli attack against Lebanon or a massacre of the Palestinian people on their soil.

The paper stresses: From day one in the Madrid conference, Israel knew that withdrawal from all of the Golan Heights is an indispensable condition for establishing peace with Syria. It must also be stressed that Israeli occupation of every inch of the Arab territories must end on the basis of the initiative on which the Madrid conference was based.

AL-BA'TH concludes by saying: If Israel is serious about achieving peace, then the Arabs have responded favorably to Madrid and Washington talks because they are advocates of peace and because peace is their objective.

Libyan Planning Secretary Arrives in Damascus

JN1305190594 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 13 May 94

[Text] Dr. Muhammad Bayt-al-Mal, secretary of the General People's Committee for Planning, Trade, and Finance in the Libyan Jamahiriyah, arrived in Damascus this evening on a visit that will last several days. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Dr. Muhammad Khalid al-Mahayini, minister of finance; Humayyid Abu-Bakr Jallud, secretary of Libyan Relations [Bureau] in Damascus; and ranking Finance Ministry officials.

In a statement to a SANA correspondent, Dr. Bayt-al-Mal expressed his happiness at visiting Syria and said: We always look forward to meeting with brothers in Syria in order to exchange ideas on all issues of common concern. He hoped his visit will develop relations of fraternal cooperation between the two sisterly countries and peoples.

Al-Zu'bi Receives Libyan Official, FAO Director

JN1605144394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 16 May 94

[Text] Mahmud al-Zu'bi, chairman of the Council of Ministers, received at 1100 today Dr. Muhammad Bayt-al-Mal, secretary of the General People's Committee for Planning, Trade, and Finance in the Libyan Jamahiriyah. Finance Minister Muhammad Khalid al-Mahayini and the secretary of the Libyan Relations Bureau in Damascus attended.

During the meeting, Bayt-al-Mal conveyed the greetings of 'Abd-al-Majid al-Qu'ud, secretary of the General People's Congress, to Mahmud al-Zu'bi, who also asked the LIbyan official to convey his greetings to al-Qu'ud. Talks dealt with relations between the two fraternal countries.

Al-Zu'bi then received Jack Dyuf, director general of the Food and Agriculture organization [FAO] and the delegation accompanying him. The meeting was attended by As'ad Mustafa, minister of agriculture and agrarian reform. During the meeting, they discussed the FAO's role and activities in Syria.

Dr. Jack Dyuf arrived in Damascus this morning on a two-day visit to Syria. He was received at Damascus International Airport by As'ad Mustafa, minister of agriculture and agrarian reform, the minister's assistant, senior ministry officials, and the FAO representative in Damascus.

In a statement to SANA correspondent, Dyuf expressed his happiness over visiting Damascus. He said: I am sure you know that our organization's council will meet at the end of this month to discuss changes in the organization and its working program, as well as some new proposals. Therefore, it was necessary for me to pay cordial visits to several friendly countries, like Syria, which are playing an important role and to contact these countries' governments to discuss the final proposals to be made during the organization's upcoming meetings.

This is my first visit to this country after I assumed my position in the organization, and I hope the visit will give me a chance to meet with officials in the Syrian Government to thank them for their contributions to the organization.

Al-Asad Receives FAO Director General

JN1705172294 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 17 May 94

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received Jack Dyuf, the director general of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO] at 1215 today. The meeting was attended by Agriculture Minister As'ad Mustafa and the FAO Damascus office director, Mustafa Nasir. Talks dealt with the organization's role in agricultural development in the world and in realizing food security in the future.

The president expressed Syria's appreciation for the FAO efforts and Syria's eagerness to cooperate with it to realize its aims.

The FAO director expressed admiration for the Syrian agricultural policy and promised that the FAO will contribute toward raising Syria's agricultural production capacity.

The FAO director left Damascus today after a two-day visit during which he met with President Hafiz al-Asad.

He was seen off by As'ad Mustafa, the Agriculture Minister, Yahya Baqqur, director general of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development; the assistant agriculture minister; the regional FAO representative in Damascus; and senior agriculture Ministry and UN officials in Damascus.

Bangladesh

President Receives Pakistani Naval Delegation

BK1905031594 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0130 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] The visiting three-member Pakistan naval delegation led by its navy chief, Admiral Sayeed M. Khan, met President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban [President House] in Dhaka yesterday. While exchanging views with Adm. Sayeed, President Biswas appreciated the cooperation between the navies of the two countries. The Pakistan Navy chief assured to continue their help to Bangladesh Navy for its development. He appreciated the progress of the Bangladesh Navy. Bangladesh Navy chief Rear Admiral Mohammad Mohaimenul Islam was present.

Australia To Give $1.6 Million in Technical Aid

BK2005105194 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1230 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Australia will provide technical assistance of 40 crore 58 lakh taka, equivalent to $1.6 million, for the wheat development project of the Wheat Research Center of the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute. A memorandum of understanding to this effect was signed in Dhaka today. The Australian high commissioner in Bangladesh, (Kenneth W. Askiner), and the joint secretary of the Economic Relations Division of the Ministry of Finance, A.S.M. Alamgir, signed the memorandum on behalf of their respective governments. This technical assistance will be utilized for research and training and for increasing the institutional authority of the Wheat Research Center.

India

'Positive Outcome' of Rao-Clinton Talks Viewed

BK2005052194 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 20 May 94

[Commentary by Bhupal Inder Saini]

[Text] The positive ambience created by Mr. Narasimha Rao's first meeting with President Clinton should go a long way in launching India and the United States on a new partnership of peace and development. Expectedly, the focus of the White House talks was on India's economic reforms and the opportunities they offer for strengthening Indo-American economic ties. There are differences, no doubt, in the two countries' approach to issues like nuclear nonproliferation, missile technology control and human rights. But as President Clinton himself put it, they have to be viewed in the totality of circumstances. Being friends does not mean one must see eye to eye on every matter.

A major gain of the summit meeting was the resolve by the two countries to continue discussion on issues of which India and the United States hold different views. As the prime minister put it while talking to the Indian and ethnic media personnel, the only way to resolve differences is to talk to and understand each other. So far as Indo-U.S. relations are concerned, this dialogue has not been as emphatic as it promises to be now.

Significantly, President Clinton acknowledged that with the economic reforms now under way, India is destined to emerge as one of the biggest free markets of the world. Both he and Mr. Narasimha Rao recognized that with the expansion of its economy, India would be able to contribute more meaningfully to the shaping of the world, both politically and economically.

Another positive outcome of last night's talks in Washington is the decision to have regular consultations at the Foreign Office level. Such continuous dialogue will help the two countries to identify and remove the irritants and misunderstandings hindering a closer relationship.

The United States' recognition that India is poised to play a more significant role in world affairs is likely to put the relations between the two countries on a sound and realistic footing. It is also an acknowledgment by the only superpower in the world today that India as a potential major economic power cannot be wished away.

Editorial Decries Prithvi Test Postponement

BK1805083794 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 10 May 94 p 8

[Editorial: "For India's Sake"]

[Text] The feeble and amateurish denial by the Prime Minister's Office [PMO] that it influenced the postponement of the first 'user trial' of the battlefield support missile, Prithvi, is not going to cut much ice in a country recoiling at the rapid pace of encroachment on its security and sovereignty. From the pedestrian to the policy-making level the mood is extremely sceptical of official denials that fail to stand up to scrutiny, even for 24 hours. The fact of the matter is that the Prithvi was to be tried by the Army for the first time, and for which enormous logistical preparations had been made months in advance. At the last moment the test was postponed to an unscheduled date. Simple logic prompts the deduction that something is amiss, especially given the PMO's penchant for overruling those professionally charged with fulfilling their assigned roles. So is the country to blame for smelling a rat when the stench is overwhelming.

The attitude of the political authorities to the indigenous defence programmes is niggardly in its funding and inconsistent in its policy. But if despite these constraints, Indian scientists are able to craft weapon systems that rankle some, it is testimony to the nation's potential. The scientists are inspired by a vision of India as a proud, respected and secure nation whose sovereignty is not up for barter. Tragically, this vision is sadly lacking among those who are taking decisions on behalf of the people of

India. Why accuse Washington of imperiousness when India's future is being compromised by those who perceive it to be a poor third-world country unworthy of aspiring to the top league? This third-best mindset has contributed to policies that declare India is up for grabs if some President Clinton or Lee Hamilton so wills. Postponing the Prithvi trials is yet another manifestation of this servility, and whatever be the proffered excuses they are not likely to seem otherwise to someone either in Washington or Warangal.

The US knows what India is capable of achieving and is bent on ensuring that this is not realised. Applying pressure, overtly or covertly, leads Washington to believe that India can be checked. The Indian sees that lesson, and a more significant one as well. The soldiers who were to begin their familiarisation with the Prithvi and the scientists who developed it will now be convinced that when the chips are down the Government will also go down, on its knees. Delhi's inconsistency with the trials schedule is not simply a matter of changing dates. It sends an ominous signal that the country will succumb even at the cost of its security and sovereignty. After all, if there can be compromises over trial dates there is nothing to ensure that induction will not suffer the same fate. Testing is training, and greater the training the closer India is to perfection. In effect, it is a simple question of the vision for India. Prithvi, Agni et al, are metaphors for pride and respect. They have been made by, and for India. They are also essential in India's quest for an honourable place under the sun. But that presupposes a similar quest by those deciding the destiny of India.

Government Criticized for Freezing Agni Program

BK1905121094 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 14 May 94 p 8

[Editorial: "Burnt-out Case"]

[Text] India must be an extremely rich country to be able to afford that curiously labelled 'technology demonstrator' programme Agni, and then jettison it on a flight of whimsy. Countries with far greater affluence and a more experienced technical base have not been able to take that step. If they have invested countless man-hours and valuable resources, it has been with the sole aim of cashing in on the returns. And returns in the business of missiles is national security. A long-range missile means that the country which possesses it is capable of striking at enemy targets which are outside the range of its aircraft. As such, when countries develop missile systems, or demonstrate the technology as the Government of India would like the world to believe, they take the next logical step of deploying them. To contemplate any other step is tantamount to squandering the investment and, worse, taking a casual view of national security. But if the Narasimha Rao Government is to be believed, India is a land where money grows on trees and threats are the stuff of comic books.

The dilly-dallying on the Agni programme came to a rest with the Minister of State for Defence contradicting himself, the Project Director, scientists within the DRDO [Defense Research Development Organization] and above all else the Government's own threat scenarios. Agni is not going to fly any more because the funds to make it soar will not be made available. It is really as simple as turning the tap, and which the Government has finally admitted to having done to the Agni. The Agni saga now resembles a child's boredom with a toy, with the Government having satiated its attraction for high-technology gadgetry. It is a different matter that the boredom was occasioned by external pressure. And on that score the people of India have been doubly cheated. First by the wastage, and then by auxiliary considerations influencing decisions on the nation's security. Agni was developed for a purpose which in simple terms meant a platform for an Indian long-range missile system. The technologies demonstrated by Agni, to paraphrase the Government's curious expression, have little application for any other role but long-range missiles. They are now going to waste.

If some inspired regime in Washington considers India's missile programme akin to that of some third-world scoundrel the task of explaining the reality lies with Delhi. However, if Delhi itself has a pauperised vision why find faults elsewhere? By extinguishing Agni India has once again demonstrated that its vision rarely stretches beyond the Indus or, at least, the Khyber Pass. The continuation of the Prithvi programme, as a swap for Agni, is an indication of this abbreviated sense of security. Prithvi cannot make the Himalayas cease to exist, as the Agni can. And as the only nation with an ocean named after it, India's interests stretch at least that far. Servicing those interests obligates calls for purposeful leadership. But when the rulers run shy of greatness, it is nationhood that gets short-changed.

Successes in Nuclear Fuel Fabrication Viewed

BK1805142894 Bombay NAVBHARAT TIMES in Hindi 10 May 94 p 7

[By Ranjit Kumar]

[Text] India has achieved remarkable success in the production of high-quality fuel used in nuclear power plants. Due to its success in this field, India will no longer be dependent on the developed countries regarding nuclear energy. This has enabled India to join a select band of countries. India has successfully tried mixed uranium oxide as fuel for the Tarapur atomic power plant. It is worth mentioning that the United States refused to supply fuel for this plant and later prevented France from supplying fuel as well. The reason given was that India has not signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Indian scientists, however, have now developed an alternative to the U.S. fuel enriched uranium. Now India is ready to use indigenously developed fuel at Tarapur.

India has produced mixed uranium oxide fuel at the Advance Fuel Fabrication Center. A laboratory has also been set up to maintain the quality of mixed uranium oxide fuel. A plan has been prepared for plutonium reprocessing at the 200-megawatt pressurized heavy water reactor in Trombay. All practical aspects regarding the use of the alternative mixed uranium oxide as a fuel at Tarapur have been studied. Thus, in the nuclear power program, India has not only joined a select band of countries on the strength of its research, but additional successes achieved in the field of fuel fabrication has made it a world leader in some respects.

According to the annual report of the Department of Atomic Energy, India is successfully running the fast breeder test reactor at Kalpakkam. This marks the beginning of the second phase of the Indian nuclear energy program. The fuel fabricated for this fast breeder reactor is known as mixed uranium-plutonium carbide. The fuel is the total result of Indian efforts. This is the first time this fuel has been used in a fast breeder reactor. The Department of Atomic Energy is now preparing a blueprint for a 500-megawatt fast breeder test reactor using mixed uranium-plutonium carbide as a fuel.

India is now set to enter the ambitious third phase of its nuclear energy program. Under the third phase, fuel based on uranium-233 has been successfully fabricated. Encouraged by this success the Department of Atomic Energy has started working on the advanced heavy water reactor. This heavy water reactor will use thorium as fuel. The Kalpakkam fast breeder test reactor using indigenously fabricated carbide fuel has produced 10.25 megawatt of electricity on trial basis. The research and development work at the Bhabha Atomic Research Center keeps in view the future needs of the country's nuclear energy program. The outcome of the center's research has greatly boosted hopes of increasing nuclear power production. The Bhabha research program includes development of the 500-megawatt pressurized heavy water reactor and thorium- based reactor. The fabrication of fuel at the nuclear power plants itself is considered as a significant success in the direction of producing power from nuclear energy. This step will help India achieve a credible self-reliance in the field of nuclear energy. India can now escape from the pressures like the one applied by the United States for signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in return for the fuel for Tarapur.

Iran

President Urges Mutually Acceptable Hajj Program

LD2005104294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 20 May 94

[Excerpts] The unifying Friday prayers were held throughout the country simultaneously today. In Tehran, the prayers were led by Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani. [passage omitted]

In his second sermon, the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran pointed to the restrictions placed by the Saudi government on the holding of the disavowal of infidels ceremony. He said: The Saudis could have acted more sensibly and not caused differences between the two important countries of the region. Today, Islamic unity is a principle as important for us as the disavowal of infidels principle. He added: Considering the crisis points in various parts of the world, and with the wise leadership of the honorable leader of the Islamic revolution [Khamene'i], another crisis was averted over this matter.

The president advised the Saudis to think harder and to take on more correct methods in future years. He said: We hope that in the future, a program on the hajj acceptable to both countries will be formulated which will take into account the views of both sides. [passage omitted]

Velayati To Attend Non-Aligned Meeting in Cairo

NC1905115894 Paris AFP in English 1008 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Tehran, May 19 (AFP)—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati will pay the first visit to Cairo by a senior Iranian official since the 1979 Islamic revolution when he attends a meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) later this month, the TEHRAN TIMES said Thursday. Iran and Egypt broke ties after the revolution and maintain diplomatic contact at interest section level.

The paper said Velayati, who is due to leave for Cairo on May 30, could meet his Egyptian counterpart 'Amr Musa, but they "would not" discuss improving bilateral ties.

The Iranian minister will be accompanied by a high-level political and economic delegation including a member of parliament's foreign affairs subcommittee, Jalal Sadatian, the English-language daily said.

Since the revolution Tehran has been represented at international conferences in Cairo through low-ranking officials. The two governments have on several occasions expressed a desire to improve ties, but no breakthrough has yet been made due to the opposition from Islamic hardliners in Iran. The news of a meeting last September between Velayati and Musa in the sidelines of UN General Assembly triggered criticism from radicals.

Trade With UK Down; Majles May Break Ties

LD2005103594 Tehran IRNA in English 1020 GMT 20 May 94

[Text] London, May 20, IRNA—Britain's soured diplomatic relations with Iran has continued to have repercussions on trade between the two countries, which has fallen by 30 percent during the first quarter of 1994

compared with the same period last year. The latest official figures show the UK's total trade with Iran in March was only pnds 54 million, a third down on the corresponding month in 1993. Predictions are that the amount could slump even further following the discovery of a bug in Iran's London Embassy.

Most of the drop in business between the two countries is due to Tehran buying only pnds 32 m worth of goods from Britain during March, 40 percent less than last year. Iran's exports for the month, although pnds 4 m down, were actually the highest since May 1993.

London's relations with Iran have been sour since the Islamic revolution in 1979, and trade has remained at only a fraction of what was Britain's largest market in the Middle East.

In 1989, ties were finally severed by Tehran following the worldwide controversy over the publication of Salman Rushdie's blasphemous book, 'The Satanic Verses,' and were not renewed until the British Government clarified its position on the issue.

Subsequent expectations of relations to reach ambassadorial level have not since been fulfilled and instead, there has been renewed concern that Iran's Majles may again be led to break ties, unless the matter of bugging of Tehran's London mission is resolved.

Khamene'i Pardons Prisoners To Mark 'Id al-Adha

LD2005095794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 20 May 94

[Excerpt] On the occasion of the auspicious anniversary of the 'Id al-Adha and 'Id al-Ghadir, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the eminent leader of the Islamic revolution and the guardian of the cause of Muslims, pardoned or reduced the sentences of 2,289 persons convicted by Islamic revolution, general, and military courts throughout the country.

Ayatollah Yazdi, head of the Judicial Power, requested a pardon or reduction in the sentences of the aforementioned convicted persons and the eminent leader agreed with his request. [passage omitted]

President Inaugurates Optic Fiber, Solar Cell Plant

LD1905143694 Tehran IRNA in English 1427 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] Tehran, May 19, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani while inaugurating Iran's first plant manufacturing optic fiber and solar cells Thursday, said the Islamic Republic relied less on foreign currencies during its reconstruction era.

"The world's situation is such that we can prepare all our needed goods from various countries, even from those which are enemies of the Islamic revolution," the president said during his 3-hour visit to the plant which is affiliated to the Ministry of Post, Telephone and Telegraph. Addressing the staff of the plant, the president said that all doors were open for reconstruction of the country and that "our vigilant people are ready to bear hardships to insure the prosperity of their children in the future." He pointed to the significance of solar energy and energies generated by wind and sea, saying that all these types of energy could be generated inside the country. "Such energies may not be economical at present but we should lay the foundation of this," he added.

Referring to the government's investments in martyr Raja'i and martyr 'Abbaspur hydroelectric power stations, he said "the energy generated by the two power plants is cheap, sustainable and safe... fortunately we ourselves build such dams, using domestic resources."

He said that the optic fiber and solar cells plant, the first of its kind in Iran, was of great importance in area of using solar energy. He said that it was very important that small solar power plants be installed in mountainous and rugged rural regions where setting up of power transmission lines would be uneconomical.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said though solar energy might be more expensive than other types of energies, its advantages over other sorts of energies necessiated its use.

ETTELA'AT Launches International Edition

LD1905171094 Tehran IRNA in English 1659 GMT 19 May 94

[Text] London, May 19, IRNA—The London office of the Persian daily ETTELA'AT announced Thursday that it had successfully issued its special international edition in New York for the first time this week.

The international edition was launched initially in London two months ago as a weekly to cater for the Iranian community in the UK and elsewhere in Europe. Its 12-page format includes a section in English and was said to have proved very popular.

The paper is edited in Tehran and beamed for publication by satellite to London as well as New York, which will assist the speed of publication throughout America.

Plans were said by ETTELA'AT to be well advanced for a special daily international edition, which could start as early as next week and like the weekly version, will differ in content to the Persian afternoon edition available in Tehran.

The London office spoke favorably about the successful launch of Iran's first newspaper to be printed abroad since the Islamic revolution, which is available from newsagents, Iranian shops or through subscription.

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